# The Batchelers Banquet,

*OR,*

## A Banquet for Batchelers,

Wherein is prepared ſundry dainty diſhes to furniſh their Tables, curiouſly dreſt, and ſeriouſly ſerved in.

Pleaſantly diſcourſing the variable humours of Women, their quickneſſe of wits, and unſearchable deceits.

*View them well, but taſte not,*
*Regard them well, but waſte not.*

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You Batchellors that with us mean to feaſt,
Come all and welcome to our homely fare;
If at our Banquet you will be a Gueſt,
Here at our furniſht Table take a ſhare:
Our Ordinary is but ſix pence price,
Variety of diſhes, be not nice.

We muſt confeſs our board it is not ſpread
As is the married-mans, with Carp and Lout;
We do not uſe to feed upon Gods-head,
Crabs, Ill-pies, Gudgeon, nor the dogged Pout:
For fleſh, we taſte no Souſe, no Lamb, no Quaile,
No Woodcock, Wigeon, Bittern, Gooſe nor Raile.

For our laſt ſervice, we feed not on Chuſe;
Small-reaſons, Bitter-almonds, nor choak-pears;
We eat the beſt, and do the worſt refuſe,
Have good content, and ſing away ſad cares:
Good diet, Engliſh beer, and Spaniſh ſherry,
Come Batchellors then let us all be merry.

# The Batchelers Banquet:

Or a Banquet for Bachelers: wherein is prepared ſundry diſhes to furniſh their Table: Curiouſly dreſt, and ſeriouſly terved in.

## CHAP. I.

### The humour of a young wife new married.

IT is the natural inclination of a young Gallant in the pleaſant prime, and flower of his flouriſhing youth, being freſh luſty and jocond, to take no other care but to imploy his money to buy gay preſents for pretty laſſes, to frame his green wits in penning love Ditties, his voice to ſing them ſweetly his wandring eyes to gaze on the faireſt dames, and his wanton thoughts to plot means for the ſpeedy accompliſhment of his wiſhed deſires, according to the compas of his eſtate. And albeit his parents or ſome other of his kinred, do perhaps furniſh him with neceſſary maintenance, ſo that he wants nothing, but lives in all eaſe & delight; yet cannot this content him, or ſatiſfie his unexperienced mind: for although he daily ſee many married men firſt lapt in lo's pound, wanting former liberty, and compaſſed round in a cage of many cares: yet notwithſtanding over-ruled by ſelf-will, and blinded by folly he ſuppoſes them therein to have the fulneſſe of their delight, becauſe they have ſo near them the Image of content, Venus ſtar gloriouſly blazing upon them. I mean a dainty faire wife bravely attired, whoſe apparel perhaps is not yet paid for, howſoever (to draw their husband in to a fools paradiſe) they make them believe that their father or mother have of their coſt & bounty affoarded it. This luſty youth (as I earſt ſaid ſeing them already in this maze of bitter ſweetneſſe, he goes round about, turmoyling himſelf in ſeeking an entrance, and taking ſuch pains to finde his own pain, that in the end, he gets, when for the haſte he makes to have a taſte of theſe ſuppoſed delicates he hath no leiſure to think or no care to provide thoſe things that are hereto requiſite. The jolly Penker being thus gotten in, doth for a time ſwim in delight, and hath no ſe-

ure at all to winde himself out again: till time and use, which makes all things more familiar and leſſe pleaſing, do qualifie this humour: then glutted with ſatiety, or pinched with penury, he may perhaps begin to ſee his folly, and repent as well his tokenleſs, as his too much forwardneſſe, but all too late, he muſt have patience perforce: his wife muſt be maintained according to her degree, and withall (commonly it haps for carries the right ſtomack of a woman) ſlender maintenance will not ſerve, for as their minds mount above their eſtates, ſo commonly they will have their abilliments. And if at a feaſt or ſome other feſtiual meeting whereunto ſhe is invited, ſhe ſee any of the company gallantly attired for coſt or faſhion, or both, or chiefly the latter, for generally women do affect novelties, ſhe forthwith moves a queſtion in her ſelf, why ſhe alſo ſhould not be in the like ſort attired, to have her garments cut after the new faſhion as well as the reſt, and anſwers it with reſolution, that ſhe will and muſt have the like: ſwaiting only fit time and place for the moving and winning of her husband thereunto, of both which ſhe will make ſuch choice, that when ſhe ſpeaks ſhe will be ſure to ſpæd; obſerving her opportunity when ſhe might take her husband at the moſt advantage, which is commonly the garden of love, the ſtate of marriage delights, and the life wherein the weaker ſex hath ever the better: when therefore this luſty Gallant would fulfill his deſire, for which cauſe he chiefly ran willfully into the peril of lobs pound, then ſqueamiſhly ſhe begins thus, ſaying, I pray you husband let me alone, trouble me not, for I am not well at eaſe: which he hearing, preſently makes this reply.

Why my ſweet heart what ailes you, are you not well: I pray thee wife tell me, where lies thy griefe? or what is the cauſe of your diſcontent? whereupon the wife woman fetching a deepe ſigh makes this anſwer: O husband, God help me, I have cauſe enough to grieve, and if you knew all you would ſay ſo: but alas it is in vain to tell you any thing, ſeeing that whatſoever I ſay, you make but little reckoning of it: and therefore it is beſt for me to bury my ſorrows in ſilence, being out of hope to have any helpe at your hands. Jeſus, wife (ſaith he) why uſe you theſe words? is my unkindneſſe ſuch, that I may not know your griefe: tell me I ſay what is the matter? In truth husband it were to no purpoſe, for I know your cuſtome well enough; as for my words, they are but waſte winde in your eares, for how great ſoever my griefe is, I am aſſured

assured you will but make light of it, and think that I speak it for some other purpose.

Go to Wife, saith her husband, tell it me, for I will know it. Well husband, if you will needs, you shall. You know on Thursday last, I was sent for, and you willed me to goe to Mistresse M. Churching, and when I came thither, I found great chéere, and no small company of wives, but the meanest of them all was not so ill attired as I, and surely I was never so ashamed of my selfe in my life: Yet I speake it not to praise my selfe, but it is well knowne, and I dare boldly say, that the best women there, came of no better stock than I. But alas, I speake not this for my self, for God wot I passe not how meanly I am apparelled, but I speake it for your credit, and my friends. Why Wife, saith hée, of what calling and degrée were those you speake of? Truely good Husband (saith shee) the meanest that was there, being but of my degree, was in her lose Gowne with hanging sleeves, her French Rose, her Silke Grograine Kirtle, her Bever Hat, with a Gold Band, and these with the rest of her attire, made of the newest fashion, which is knowne the best: Whereas I poore wretch had on my threebare Gowne, which was made me so long agoe, against I was married, besides that it was now too short for mee, for it is I remember, since it was made about three years agoe, since which time I am growne very much, and so changed with cares and griefes, that I looke farre older than I am: Trust mee, I was so ashamed, being amongst my neighbours, that I had not the heart to looke up, but that which grieved mee most was, when Mistresse Luce B. and Mistresse T. said openly, that it was a shame both for you and mee, that I had no better Apparell. Tush Wife (quoth the good man) let them say what they list, we are never a whit the worse for their words, wee have enough to doe with our money, though wee spend it not in Apparell: You know Wife, when we met together, we had no great store of Houshold-stuffe, but were faine to buy it afterward by some and some, as God sent money, and yet you see wee want many things that is necessary to be had: Besides, the Quarter Day is neere, and my Landlord you know will not forbeare his Rent: Moreover, you see how much it costs me in Law about the recovering of the tenement which I should have by you: God send me to get it quickly,

or else I shall have but a bad bargain of it, for it hath already almost cost me as much as it is worth. At these words his Wives choler begins to rise, whereupon she makes him this answer. Godly, godly, (saith she) when you have nothing else to hit me in the teeth withall, pœ twit me with the tenement, but it is my fortune. Why how now Wife saith her Husband, are you now angry for nothing? Nay, I am not angry, I must be content with that which God hath ordained for me: But I wis the time was, when I might have bin better advised, there are some yet living that would have beene glad to have me in my smocke, whom you know well enough to be proper young men, and therewithall wise and wealthy: but I verily suppose I was bewicht to match with a man that loves me not: though I purchased the ill will of all my friends for his sake this is all the good that I have gotten thereby: I may truly say I am the most unhappy Woman in the world: Doe you thinke that I. . . om. and N.M. (who were both suters to me) doe keepe their Wives so? no by lady, for I know the worst clothes that they cast off, is better than my very best which I weare on the chiefest dayes in the yeere: I know not what the cause is that so many good women dye, but I would to God that I were dead too, that I might trouble you no more, seeing I am such an eyesore unto you. Now by my faith wife saith he, you say not well, there is nothing that I think too good for you, if my ability can compass it. But you know our estate, we must do as we may, and not as we would, yet be of good cheer, and I will strain my self to please you, in this or any other thing.

Nay, I have no minde on such matters, and if you had no more desire thereto than I, I promise you, you would never touch me. No Wife (saith he) hoping so with a jest to make her merry, by my honestly I sweare, I verily think that if I were dead, you would not be long without another husband. No marvel sure saith she, I lead such a good life with you now. By my Christian soule I sweare, there should never man kisse my lips againe. And if I thought I should live long with you, I would use meanes to make my selfe away: Herewithall shee puts finger in the eye, making shew as though she wept: Thus playes she with the silly fot her husband) meaning nothing lesse than so to do as she sayes) while hee poore sole is in minde both well and ill apaid: he thinks himself well, because he imagines her of a cold constitution, and therefore exceeding chaste: hee thinks him-

himselfe ill, to see her fained teares, for that he verily suppoſes shee loves him, which doth not a little grieve him, being so kinde and tender hearted. Therefore hee useth all meanes possible to make her quiet, never will he give her over, while he hath effected it. But she prosecuting her former purpose which she hath already set in so faire a forwardnesse, makes as though shee were nothing moved with his gentle perswasions: Therefore to crosse him, she gets her up betimes in the morning, sooner a great deale than shee was wont, powting and lowring all the day, and not giving him one good word. But when night comes, and they againe both in bed, laying her selfe sullenly downe, and continuing still silent, the good man hearkens whether she sleep or no, feels if she be well covered or not, he softly pluckes up the clothes upon her, lapping her warme, being double diligent to please her. Shee lying all this while winking, noting his kindenesse and carefulnesse towards her, seemes on a sudden to awake from a sound sleep, grumbling and nusling under the sheets giving him occasion thereby thus to begin: How now sweet-heart, what are you asleep? Asleep (saith she) I faith Sir no: a troubled mind can never take good rest. Why woman are not you quiet yet? No doubt (saith she) you care much whether I be or no. By lady wife, and so I do: and since yesternight, I have bethought mee (having well considered your words) that it is very meet and requisite, that you should bee better furnished with apparell than heretofore you have beene, for indeed I must confesse thy clothes are too simple; and therefore I meane against my cousin M. wedding (which you know will be shortly) that you shall have a new gowne made on the best fashion, with all things suitable thereunto, in such sort that the best woman in the parish shall not passe you. Nay (quoth she) God willing I mean to go to no weddings this twelve moneth, for the goodly credit I got by the last. By my faith (saith he) but you shall, what? you must not be so heart-strong and self-willed. I tell you if I say the word you shall go, and you shall want nothing that you ask or require. What I ask? alas husband (quoth she) I ask nothing. neither doe I speake this for any desire that I have to go braue: trust me, for mine owne part I care not if I never stirre abroad, save onely to Church: but what I said was upon the speeches which were there used, and such other like words, which my Gossip N. told me that she had also heard in company where she was. With these words the good kinde fool her husband

band is nelled, for on the one side he considers his sundry other occasions to use money, & his small store thereof, which is perhaps so slender, that his single purse cannot extempore change a double pistolet. And so ill vested of houshold stuffe, that perhaps the third part is not a sufficient pawn for so much money as this new suite of his Wives will stand him in. But on the other side he weighs her discontent the report of neighbours speeches, and lastly, how good a Wife he hath of her, how chaste, how loving, how religious. whereof the kinde Asse hath such an opinion, that he thanks God with all his heart, for blessing him with such a Jewel: In this thought he resolves that all other things set aside, he must and will content her. And herewithall hee sets his braines a fresh on worke, to consider how best hee may compasse it: And in this humour he spends the whole night without sleepe, in continual thought. And it comes to passe that the Wife perceiving to what a point she hath brought her purpose, doth not a little rejoyce and smile in her sleeve to see it. The next morning by the breake of day the poore man gets up, who for care and thought could take no rest all night, and goes presently to the Drapers, of whom he takes up cloth for three moneths time, paying for it after an excessive rate, by reason of their forbearance, and in like sort makes provision for the rest; for perhaps because he would buy it at a better rate, he pawns for ready money the Lease of his house, or some faire piece of plate, which his grandfather bought, and his father charily keeping, left for him, which now he is enforced to part with, to furnish thereby his wives pride; and having thus dispatched his businesse hee returnes home with a merry heart, and shews his Wife what he hath done: who being now sure of all, begins to curse the first inventers of pride, and excesse in apparell: saying, Fie upon it, what pride is this? but I pray you husband, do not say hereafter that I made you lay out your money in this needlesse sort, for I protest that I have no delight or desire to go thus gaishly: If I have to cover my body and keepe me warm, it contents mee. The good man hearing his Wife say so, doth even leape for joy, thinking all her words Gospel, and therefore presently he sets the taylor a worke, willing him to dispatch out of hand, that his wife may be brave so soone as may be. She having thus obtained her purpose, doth inwardly triumph for very joy, howsoever outwardly shee doth dissemble. And whereas before shee vaunted, that she could finde in her heart to

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kæp always within dors, she will be sure now every god day to go abroad, and at each least and Gossips mæting to be a continual guest, that all may sæ her bravery, and how well she doth become it; for which cause, she also comes every Sunday daily to the Church, that there she may sæ and be sæn, which her Husband thinks she doth of mær devotion. But in the mean while the time runs on, and the day comes wherein the poor man must pay his Creditors, which being unable to do, he is at length arrested, and after due proceeding in Law, he hath an Execution served upon him, or his pawn is forfeited, and by either of both he is almost utterly undone. Then must his fine wife of force vaile her peacocks plumes, and fall again to her old brass, kæping her house against her will, because she could not be furnisht with gay attire according to her minde. But God knoweth in what misery the silly man doth live, being daily vexed with her brawling and scolding, exclaiming against him, that all the house nothing thereof, and in this sort she begins her sagaries: Now cursed be the day that ever I saw thy face, and a shame take them that brought me first acquainted with thee: I would to God I had either dies in my cradle, or gone to my greave when I went to be married with thee. Was ever woman of my degræ and birth brought to this beggery? Or any of my bringing up kept thus basely, and brought to this shame? I which little knew what labour meant, must now toyle and tend the house as a drudge, having never a coat to my back, or scant handsome hose to my legs, and yet all little enough, whereas, I wis, I might have had twenty good marriages, in the meanest of which I should have lived at ease and pleasure, without being put to any paine, or suffering any penury. Wretch that I am, why do I live? Now would to God I were in my grave already, for I am weary of the World, weary of my life, and weary of all. Thus doth the daily complain, and lay all the fault of her fall on him which least deserved it, nothing remembring her owne pride, in coveting things above their estate or ability, her misgovernment, and daily gadding with her Gossips to Banquets and Bridals, when she should have lookt to her house and followed her owne business at home. And his folly is also such, that being blinded with dotage, (through too much loving her,) cannot perceive that she is the cause of all this evil, of all the cares, griefs,

Alas poor fool.

and thoughts, which perplex and torture him, and yet nothing cuts him so much as this, to see her so fumish and unquiet, whom if he can any time somwhat pacifie then is his heart somwhat at rest. Thus doth the silly wretch toss and turmoyle himself in Lobs pound, wrapt in a kind of pleasing woe, out of the which he hath neither power nor will to winde himself: but therein doth consume the remnant of his languishing life, and miserably end his days,

## CHAP. II. The humour of a woman pranked up in brave Apparel.

THe nature of a woman inclined to another kind of humour, (which is this) when the wife seeing her self bravely apparelled, and that she is therewith fair and comely, (or if she be not) yet thinking her self so (as women are naturally given to sooth themselves) she doth, as I said before, haunt after feasts and solemn meetings, wherewith her husband perhaps is not very well pleased: which she perceiving, the more to bleer his eyes, she takes with her some kinswoman, or Gossip, or possibly some lusty Gallant of whom she claims kinred, though in very deed there be no such matter, but onely a smooth colour to deceive her husband: And perchance to induce him the sooner to believe it, her mother (which is privy to the match) will not stick to say and swear it is so: Yet sometime the husband to prevent his wives gadding, will feigne some lett; as want of horses, or other like hinderances: then presently the Gossip or Kinswoman (of whom before I spake) will thus solemnly assault him.

Believe me Gossip, I have as little pleasure as who hath least, in going abroad, for I wis I had not so much business to do this xii. moneths as I have at this instant: yet should I not go to this wedding, being so kindly bidden, I know the young Bride would take it in very ill part: Yea, and (I may say to you) so would our neighbors, and other our friends, which will be there, who would verily imagine, we keep away for some other cause: and were it not for this I protest I would not stir out of doors, neither would my Cousin your wife have any desire to go thither: thus much I can truly witness, that I never knew any woman take less delight in such things than your wife; or which being abroad, will make more haste to be at home again.

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The silly man her Husband, being vanquished by these words, and no longer able to deny their request, demands only what other women do appoint to go, and who shall man them? Marry Sir, (saith she) that shall my Cousin H. And besides your wife and I, there goes my Kinswoman T. and her Mother, Mistris H. and her Aunt: my Uncle T. & his Brother, to be met with both, their wives Mistris C. my next neighbour: and to conclude, all the women of account in this Street: (I dare boldly say) that honester Company there cannot be, though it were to convey a Kings Daughter.

Now it oft chanced that this smooth tongued Orator who pleads thus quaintly with womans art, must have for her pains a Gown cloth, a Jewel, or some other recompence, if she prevail with the good man, and cunningly play her part. He after some pause (perhaps) will reply in this sort: Gossip, I confess it is very good company, but my wife hath now great business at home, and besides she useth to go very much abroad, yet for this time I am content she shall go. But I pray ye, Dame (quoth he) be at home betimes. His wife seeing that her gossip had gotten leave makes as if she cares not for going forth, saying: By my faith man I have something else to do, than to go to a Bridal at this present: what? we have a great houshold, and rude servants (God wot) whose idleness is such, that they will not do any thing, if a bodies back be turn'd: for it is an old Proverb: (When the Cat is away the Mouse will play.) And therefore Gossip hold you content, we must not be altogether careless, nor set so much by our pleasure to neglect our profit: And therefore hold me excused, for I cannot now be spared, nor I will not go, that is flat. Nay good gossip (saith the other) seeing your husband hath given you leave, let us have your company this once, and if it be but for my sake, such a chance as this comes not every day. With that the good man taking the old Eyb aside, whispers her thus in the ear: were it not Gossip for the confidence I repose in you, I protest she should not stir out of doors at this time. Now as I am an honest woman (quoth she) and of my credit Gossip, you shall not need to doubt any thing.

Thus to horse they get, and away they spur with a merry gallop, laughing to themselves, mocking and flouting the silly man for his simplicity: the one saying to the other, that he had a shrewd jea-

lers brain, but it should avail him nothing. Tush (said the young woman) it is an old saying, He had need have a long spoon that will eat with the devil, and she of a good wit that would prevent the envy of a jealous fool: and with this and the like talke, they passe the time till they come to the place appointed, where they meet with lusty Gallants, who (peradventure) had at the former feast made the match, and were come thither of purpose to strike up the bargain. But howsoever it is, this lusty Lasse lacks no good cheer, nor any kindness which they can shew her.

Imagine now how forward she will be to shew her best skill in dancing and singing, and how lightly she will afterward esteem her husband being thus courted and commended by a crew of lusty Gallants, who seeing her so bravely attired, and graced with so sweet and smooth a tongue, so sharp a wit, so amiable a countenance, will each strive to exceed other, in serving, loving and praising her: for the gallant carriage and wanton demeanour of so beautifull a piece, cannot chuse but incourage a meer coward, and heat (if not inflame) a frozen heart: One allayes her with sugred tearms, and some pleasant discourse, painting forth his affection with Lovers eloquence: Another gives her a privie token, by straining her soft hand, or treading upon her pretty foot: Another eyes her with a piercing and pitifull look making his countenance his fancies Herauld: and perhaps the third (which is most likely to speed) bestows upon her a gold Ring, a Diamond, a Ruby or some such like costly toy: By all which aforesaid tokens, she may well conceive their meanings, (if she have any conceit at all;) and sometimes it so falls out, that they fall in where they should not: and she stepping somewhat aside, doth so shrewdly strain her honesty, that hardly or never the grief can be cured. But to proceed, this over-gorgeous wantoning of his wife brings the poor man behind hand, and doth withall cause a greater inconvenience; for in the end by one means or other, either through her too much boldness, or her Lovers want of wariness, the matter at length comes to light, whereof some friend or kinsman gives him notice.

He being tickled by this bad report, thereupon searching further, finds it true, or gathers more likelihood of suspition: then presently infects his thoughts with jealousie, into which mad tormenting humour, no wise man will ever fall: for it is an evil both extreme

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and endleſs, eſpecially (if it be iuſtly conceiued) upon the wiues knowen lewdneſs, for then there is no hope of curing. She on the other ſide ſeeing this and receiuing for her looſe life many bitter ſpeeches, doth cloſly keep on her old courſe, but now more for ſpight than pleaſure; for it is in vaine to think that ſhe will reclaim her ſelf. And if he (hoping by conſtraint to make her honeſt) fall to beating her, (though he uſe never ſo much ſeuerity) he ſhall but kindle ſo much more the fire of that lewd loue, which ſhe beares unto others: Hereon follows a heap of miſchiefs; he growes careleſs of his buſineſs, letting all things run to ruine: ſhe on the other ſide becomes ſhameleſs, converting into deadly hate the loue that ſhe ſhould bear him. Iudge now what a purgatory of perplexities the poore man doth liue in: and yet for all this he is ſo beſotted, that he ſeems to take great pleaſure in his pains, and to be ſo far in loue with Lobs pound, that were he not already in, yet he would make all haſte poſſible to be poſſeſſed of the place, there to conſume the reſidue of his life, and miſerably end his dayes.

## CHAP. III. The humour of a woman lying in Child-bed.

THere is another humor incident to a Woman, when her husband ſees her belly to grow big (though peradventure by the help of ſome other friend) yet he perſwades himſelf it is a worke of his own framing: and this breeds him new cares and troubles, for then muſt he trot up and down day and night far and near, to get with great coſt that his wife longs for; if ſhe let fall but a pin, he is diligent to take it up, leſt ſhe by ſtooping ſhould hurt her ſelfe; She on the other ſide is ſo hard to pleaſe, that it is a great hap when he hits her humour, in bringing home that which likes her, though he ſpare no pains nor coſt to get it. And oft times through eaſe and plenty ſhe growes ſo queaſie ſtomackt, that ſhe can brook no common meats, but long for ſtrange and rare things, which whether they be to be had or no, yet ſhe muſt have them, there is no remedy. She muſt have Cherries, though for a pound he pay ten ſhillings, or green Peaſcods at four nobles a peck: yea, he muſt take a horſe and ride into the Country, to get her green Codlings, when they are ſcarce ſo big as a ſcotch button. In this trouble and vexation of mind and body, lives the ſilly man for ſix or ſeven moneths, all which time his wife doth nothing but complain, and he

poꝛ ſoul takes all the care, riſing early, going late to bed, and to be ſhoꝛt, is ſeen to ſlay both the husband and the huswife. But when the time dꝛaws neaꝛ of heꝛ lying dowꝛn, then muſt he tꝛudge to get Goſſips, ſuch as ſhe will appoint, oꝛ elſe all the fat's in the fiꝛe. Conſideꝛ then what coſt and tꝛouble it will be to him, to have all things fine againſt the Chꝛiſtning day, what ſtoꝛe of ſugaꝛ, Biſkets, Comphets and Caꝛaweys, Maꝛmalet, and Maꝛchpane, with all kind of ſweet ſuckets and ſuperfluous banquetting ſtuffe, with a hundꝛed otheꝛ odde and needleſs tꝛifles, which at that time muſt fill the pockets of dainty dames: Beſides the chaꝛges of the Mid-wife, ſhe muſt have heꝛ nuꝛſe to attend and keep heꝛ, who muſt make foꝛ heꝛ waꝛm bꝛoths, and coſtly caudels, enough both foꝛ heꝛ ſelf and heꝛ miſtꝛis; being of the mind to faꝛe no woꝛſe than ſhe: If heꝛ miſtꝛis be fed with paꝛtꝛidge, plouer, woodcocks, quailes, oꝛ any ſuch like, the nuꝛſe muſt be paꝛtneꝛ with heꝛ in all theſe daintſes: neither yet will that ſuffice, but duꝛing the whole month ſhe pꝛiuily pilfeꝛs away the ſugeꝛ, the nutmegs and ginger, with all otheꝛ ſpices that comes unꝛeꝛ heꝛ keeping, putting the poꝛ man to ſuch expence, that in a whole yeaꝛ he can ſcaꝛcely ꝛecouꝛ that one moneths chaꝛges. Then euery day after heꝛ lying dowꝛn, will ſundꝛy dames viſit heꝛ, which aꝛe heꝛ neighboꝛs, heꝛ kinſwomen, and otheꝛ heꝛ ſpecial acquaintance, whom the good man muſt welcome with all chaꝛefulneſs, and be ſuꝛe theꝛe be ſome daintſes in ſtoꝛe to ſet befoꝛe them: wheꝛe they about ſome thꝛee oꝛ foueꝛ houꝛs (oꝛ poſſibly half a day) will ſit chatting with the Childwife. And bythat time the cups of wine have meꝛꝛily tꝛold about, and half a dozen times moiſtned theiꝛ lips with the ſweet juyce of the puꝛple gꝛape: They begin thus one with anotheꝛ to diſcouꝛſe: Good Lꝛd neighboꝛ, I maꝛvel how ouꝛ Goſſip Fꝛees doth, I have not ſeen the good ſoul this many a day.

Oh God help heꝛ quoth anotheꝛ, foꝛ ſhe hath heꝛ hands full of woꝛk, and heꝛ heaꝛt full of heavineſs: While ſhe dꝛudges all the week at home, heꝛ husband like an unthꝛift neveꝛ leaves running abꝛoad to the Tennis coꝛꝛt, and dicing houſes ſpending all that euer he hath in ſuch lewd ſoꝛt: yea, and if that were the woꝛſt it is well: but heaꝛ you Goſſip, theꝛe is anotheꝛ matteꝛ ſpoils all, he caꝛes no moꝛe foꝛ his wife, than foꝛ a dog, but keeps queanes euen unꝛeꝛ heꝛ noſe: Jeſu ſaith anotheꝛ, who would thinke he were ſuch a man, he behaues himſelf ſo oꝛdeꝛly and ciuilly to all mens ſights:

Euen

Tush, hold your peace Gossip (saith the other) it is commonly seen, the still sow eats up all the draffe, he carries a smooth countenance, but a corrupt conscience: That I know F. well enough, I will not say he loves mistris G. go to Gossip, I drink to you. Yea (and saith another) there goes foul lies if G. himself loves not his maid N. I can tell you their mouths will not be stopt with a bushel of wheat that speak it. Then the third fetching a great sigh, saying, by my troth such another bold Wettrels have I at home: for never give me credit Gossip, if I took her not the other day in close conference with her Master; but I think I bellwadled my maid in such sort, that she will have small list to do so again. Nay Gossip (saith another) had it been to me, that should not have served her turn, but I would have turned the queen out of doors to pick a Sallet, for wot you what Gossip? It is ill setting fire and flax together: but I pray you tell me one thing, when saw you our friend Mistris C. Now in good sooth she is a kind creature, and a very gentle Peat: I promise you I saw her not since you and I drank a pinte of Wine with her in the fish market. O Gossip (saith another) there is a great change since that time, for they have been fain to pawn all that ever they have, and yet God knows her husband lies in prison. O the passion of my heart (saith another) is all their great and glorious shew come to nothing? good Lord what a world is this? Why Gossip (saith another) it was never like to be otherwise, for they loved ever to go fine, and fare daintily, and by my faith Gossip, this is not a world for those matters, and thereupon I drink to you. This is commonly their communication, where they find chear according to their choyce, But if it happen contrary, that they find not things in such plenty and good order as they would wish, then one or other of them will talk to this effect: Trust me Gossip, I marvell much, and so do all our other friends, that your Husband is not ashamed to make so small account of you, and this your sweet child, if he bee such a niggard at the first, what will he bee by that time he hath five or six? it doth well appear he bears but little love to you whereas your vouchsafing to match with him hath done him more credit than ever had any of his kindred. Before God, saith another, I had rather see my husbands eyes out then he should serve me so: therefore if you be wise use him not to time: ther in this sort let him tread you under foot: I tell you it is a foul shame for him, and

you

you may be well assured sith he begins thus that hereafter he will use you in the same order, if not worse. In good sooth saith the third, it seems very strange to me, that a wise woman, and one of such parentage as you are, who as all men knows, is by blood far his better, can indure to be thus used by a base companion: Blame us not to speak, good Gossip for I protest the wrong that he doth you doth likewise touch us, and all other good women that are in your case.

This Child-wife hearing all this, begins to weep, saying: Alas Gossip, I know not what to do, or how to please him, he is so divers and wayward a man, and besides he thinks all too much that is spent. Gossip, he is (said one) a bad and a naughty man, and so it is well seen by your usage. All my Gossips here can tell, that when I was married to my husband, every one said that he was so hasty and hard to please, that he would kill me with grief: And indeed I may say to you, I found him crabbed enough: for he began to take upon him mightily, and thought to have wrought wonders, yet I have used such means, that I have tamed my young master, and have at this present brought him to that passe, that I dare swear he had rather lose one of his joints than wrangle with me: I will not deny, but once or twice he beat me shrewdly, which I, God wot, being young and tender, took in grievous part, but what he got by it let my Gossip Treport, who is yet a woman living, and can tell the whole story: to whom my good man within a while after said, that I was past remedy, and that he might sooner kill me, than do any good by beating me, (and by these ten bones so he should) but in the end I brought the matter so about, that I got the bridle into my own hands, so that I may now say, I do what I list: for be it right or wrong if I say it he will not gain-say it; for by this gold on my finger, let him do what he can, I will be sure to have the last word; so that in very deed, if that women be made underlings by their husbands, the fault is their own: For there is not any man alive (be he never so churlish) but his wife may make him quiet and gentle enough, if she have any wit. And therefore your good man serves you but well enough, sith you will take it so.

Believe me Gossip (saith another) were I in your case, I would give him such welcome at his coming home, and ring such a peale of bad words in his ears, that he should have small joy to stay the hearing.

Thus is the poor man handled behind his back, whiles they make no stare to help away with his good wine and sugar, (which he hath prepared,) whom they for his kindness thus ingratefully requite: yea, and now and then having their brains well heated, they will not stick to taunt him to his face: accusing him of little love and great unkindness to his wife.

Now it doth many times so chance, that he having been forth to provide such meats as she would have, he cometh home (perhaps at midnight) and before he sitteth down to rest himself, hath a very earnest desire to know how his wife doth, and perchance being loth to lie abroad, because of expences, travels the later, that he may reach to his own house: where, (when he is once com) he asketh ỳ Chamber-maid, or else the Nurse, how his wife doth: they having their errand before given them by their Mistress, answere, she is very ill at ease, and that since his departure she tasted not one bit of meat: but that towards ỳ evening she began to be a little better: all which he meerlyes. But the poor man hearing these words, grieves not a little, though he be all to be moyld, weary and wet, having gone a long journey through a bad and filthy way, upon some ill paced trotting Jade, and it may be is fasting too: yet will he neither eat nor drink, (nor so much as once sit down) till he have seen his Wife: Then the false prating Nurse, which is not to learn to cry out such a piece of service, begins to look very heavily, and to sigh inwardly, as though her Mistress had been that day at ỳ point of death; which he seeing, was the more earnest to visit his wife: whom at the entrance of the Chamber, he hears lye groaning to her self, and coming to the bed side, kindly sits down by her, saying, how now my sweet heart, how dost thou? Ah husband (saith she) I am very ill, nor was I ever so sick in my life, as I have been this day. Alas good soul (saith he) I am the more sorry to hear it. I pray thee tell me where lies thy pain? Ah husband (quoth she) you know I have been weak a long time, and not able to eat any thing. But Wife (quoth he) why did you not cause the Nurse to boyle you a Capon, and make a mess of good broth for you? So she did (said his wife) as well as she could, but it did not like me God wot, and by that means I have eaten nothing, since the broth which your selfe made me: Oh me thought that was excellent good.

Marry Wife (saith he) I will presently make you some more of

the same, and you shall eat it for my sake. With all my heart good husband (saith she) and I shall think my self highly beholding unto you. Then trudgeth he in to the Kitchin, there playes he the Cook, burning and broiling himself over the fire, having his eyes ready to be put out with smoak while he is busie in making the broth: what time he chides with his maids, calling them beasts and baggages, that knows not how to do any thing: not so much as make a little broath for a sick body, but her must bee fain to do it himselfe. Then comes down Mistres Nurse as fine as a farthing fiddle, in her petticoat and girtle, having a white wast coat, with a flaunting cambrick Ruffe about her neck; who like a Doctres in facultie, comes thus upon him. Good Lord sir, what pains you take, here is no body can please you Mistres but your selfe: I will assure you (on my credit) that I do what I can, yet for my life, I cannot any way content her. Moreover here came in mistres Cot. and mistres Con. who did both of them what they could to have your Wife eat something: Nevertheless, all they did could not make her taste one spoonfull of any thing all this live-long day: I know not what she ayls: I have kept many women in my time, both of worship, and credit, (simple though I stand here) but I never knew any so weak as she is: I, I (quoth he) you are a company of cunning Cooks, that cannot make a little broath as it should be. And by this time the broath being ready, he brings it straight to his wife, comforting her with many kind words, praying her to eat for his sake, or to taste a spoonfull or twain: which she doth, commending it to the Heavens, affirming also that the broath which the others made had no good taste in the world, and was nothing worth. The good man hereof being not a little proud, bids them make a good fire in his wives chamber, charging them to tend her well. And having given this direction, he gets himselfe to supper with some cold meat set before him, such as the Gossips left, or his Nurse could spare, and having this short pittance, he goes to bed full of care.

The next morning he gets him up betimes, and comes very kindly to know how his wife doth, who presently pops him in the mouth with a smothlye: saying, that all night she could take no rest till it grew towards the morning, and then she began to feel a little more ease, when God knows she never slept more soundly in all her life. Well wife, (said the good man) you must remember that this night is

is our gossips supper, and they will come hither with many other of our friends, therefore we must provide some good thing for them: especially, because it is your uplifting, and a fortnight at least since you were brought to bed: but good wife let us go as neare to the World as we may, seeing that our great charge doth every day increase, and money was never so ill to come by.

She hearing him say so, begins to pout, saying; would for my part I had died in travell, and my poor infant been strangled in the birth, so should you not be troubled with us at all, nor have cause to repine so much at our spending: I am sure there is never a woman in the world, that in my case hath worse keeping or is lesse chargeable, yet let me pinch and spare, and do what I can, all is thought too much that I have: Trust me I care not a straw whether you provide me any thing or no, although the sorrow be mine, the shame will be yours, as yesterday for example: I am sure here came in above a dozen of our neighbours and friends of meer kindnesse to see me, and know how I did, who by their countenance and comming, did you greater credit then you deserve: but God knows what entertainment they had, having nothing in the house to set before them which made me so much ashamed, that I knew not what to say: I tell you what, before God I may boldly speak it, (for I have seen it) that when any one of them lies in, their very servants have better fare than I my selfe have had at your hands, which they seeing (betwixt themselves yesterday) when they were here, did most cunningly flout both you and me for their entertainment. I have not (as you know) lien in above fifteen days, & can yet scant stand on my legs, and you think the time too long till I be moping about the house (to catch my bane,) as I fear I have done already. Believe me wife (quoth he) you mistake me greatly, for no man in the world can be more kind to his wife, then I have been to you. Kind to me (quoth she, by the masse that you have with a murren: no doubt but I have had a sweet messe of cherishing at your hands, but I see your drift well enough, you gape everie day for my death, and I would to God it were so for me: the month indeed is half expired, and I fear the rest will come before we be ready for it: my sister S. was here no longer ago then to day, and askt if I had ever a new Gown to be Churched in, but God wot I am far enough from it, neither do I desire it, though it be a thing which ought both by reason & custome to be observed.

And because it is your pleasure, I will rise to morrow what chance so ever befall, for the worst is, I can but lose my life: full well may I gather by this, how you will use me hereafter. and what account you would make of me, if I had nine or ten Children, but God forbid it should ever come to pass, I desire rather to be rid of my life, and so to shun the shame of the world, than long to live with such an unkind churle. Now verily wife (saith ỹ good man) I must néeds blame your impatience for growing so cholerick without cause. Without cause (quoth she) do you think I have no just cause to complain? I will assure you there is never a woman of my degree, that would put up the intolerable injuries that I have done, & easily do by meane of your hoggish conditions. Well wife, saith the good man, lye as long as you list, and rise when you will, but I pray you tel me how this new Gown may be had, which you so earnestly ask for: By my faith (quoth she) you say not wel, for I ask nothing at your hands, neither would I have it thought I might: I thank God I have gowns enough already, & sufficient to serve my turn, & you know I take no delight in garish attire, for I am past a girle, but it makes me smile to see what a shew of kindnesse you would fain make: Fie on thee dissembler, you can cog and flatter as wel as any man in this Town, and full little think they that see you abroad, what a Devil you are at home: for what with your crooked qualities with toyling, moyling, carking and caring, and being broke with Child-bearing, my countenance is quite changed, so that I look already as withered, as the bark of an Elder bough: There is my cousin T. T. who when I was a little girle, was at womans estate, and in the end married master H. with whom she leads a Ladies life looking so young and lusty, that I may seem to be her mother: I, I, such is the difference betwixt a kind, and an uncourteous husband: and who knows not but he was a suter to me, & made many a journey to my fathers house for my sake, and would so fain have had me, that while I was to marry, he would not match himself with any? but so much was I bewitch'd, that after I had once seen you, I would not have changed for the best Lord in the Land, and this I have in recompence of my love and loyalty: Go to wife (saith he) I pray you leave these lavish speeches, and let us call to mind where we may best take up cloth for your gown: for you see, such is our weak estate, that if we should rashly lay out that little money

The Fox will eat no grapes.

No more like the womam I was, than an apple is like an oyster.

money which is in the house, we might possibly be unprovided for all other necessaries: therefore whatsoeber should chance hereafter, it is best to keep something against a rainy day: And again, you know within these eight or nine days I have five pound to pay to master P. which must be done, there is no shift, otherwise I am like to sustain treble dammage. Lusly (quoth she) what talk you to me of these matters? alas I ask you nothing, I would to God I were once rid of this trouble: I pray you let me take some rest, for my head akes (God help me) as it would go in pieces, I wis you feel not my pain, and you take little care for my grief: Therefore I pray you send my gossips word that they may not come for I feel my selfe very ill at ease. Not so (quoth he) I will never break custome, nor so much as gain-say their courteous offer, they shal come sure, and be entertained in the best manner I may. Wel (quoth she) I would to God you would leave me, that I might take a little rest, and then do what you list: Upon these speeches the Nurse straight steps in, and rounds her master in the ear: I pray you sir do not force her to many words, for it makes her head light, and doth great harm to a woman in her case, especially her brains being so light for want of sleep: and besides she is, God knows, a woman of a tender and choice complexion, and with that she draws the Curtains about the Bed. Thus is the poor man held in suspence, till the next day that the Gossips come, who will play their parts so kindly, and gall him to the quick with their quibs and taunts, that his courage will be wholly quail'd, and be ready (if they should bid him, like the Prodigall Child, eben to eat draffe with the hogs) rather than he would displease them. But to proceed, he in the mean while is double diligent, to provide all things against their coming, according to his ability, and by reason of his wives words, he buyes more meat, and prepares a great deal better cheer than he thought to have done. At their coming he is ready to welcome them with his cap in hand, and all the kindnesse that may be shewed. Then doth he trunge bare headed up and down the house, with a cheerful countenance, like a good Asse fit to bear the burthen: he brings the Gossips up to his wife, and coming first to her himself, he tells her of their coming. I wis, quoth she) I had rather they had kept at home, and so they would too, if they knew how little pleasure I took in their coming. Nay, I pray you wife (saith he) give them good countenance,

tenance seeing they be come for good will: with this they enter, and after mutuall greetings, with much gossips ceremonies, down they sit and there spend the whole day in breaking their fasts, dining and in making an afternoons repast: besides their petty suppings at her beds-side, and at the cradle, where they discharge their parts so well in helping him away with his good wine and sugar, that the poor man comming oft to chear them, doth well perceive it, and grieves inwardly thereat, howsoever, he covers his discontent with a merry countenance. But they not caring how the game goes, take their pennyworths of that chear which is before them, never asking how it comes there, and so they merrily passe the time away, prattling, and talking of many good matters. Afterwards the poor man trots up and down anew to get his wife the foresaid gown, & all other things thereto suitable, whereby he sets himself soundly in debt: sometimes he is troubled with the childs brawling, sometimes he is brawld at by the nurse: then his wife complains that she was never wel since she was brought to bed, then must he cast his cares anew, devising by what means to discharge his debts, and lessen his expences: then resolves he to diminish his own port, and augment his wives bravery, he will go all the year in one suite, and make two paire of shoos serve him in a twelve month, keeping one pair for holy-days, another for working dayes, and one hat in three or four years. Thus according to his own rash desire, he is up to the ears in Lobs pound, and for all the woe and wretchednesse-th he hath felt, hee would not yet be out again. but doth then willingly consume himself in continuall care, sorrow & trouble, til death doth set him free.

## CHAP. IV. The humour of a woman that hath a charge of children.

Being tired with scolding, as a hackney Jade with travel

THe next humor that is by nature incident to a woman is when the husband hath bin married nine or ten years hath five or six children, hath passed many evill dayes unquiet nights, and troubles aforesaid. hath his lusty youthfulnesse spent, so that it is now high time for him to repent: But such is his grosse folly that he cannot, and such his dulnesse through the continuall vexations, which have tamed and wearied him that he cares not whatsoever his wife saith or doth, but is hardned like an old Asse, which being used to the whip, will not once mend his pace, be he lashed never so

much

much: The poor man seeth two or three of his daughters marriageable, which is soon known by their wanton tricks, their playing, dancing, and other youthfull toys, but he keeps them back, having perhaps small commings in, to keep, maintain and furnish them as they look for, with gowns, kirtles, linnen, and other ornaments, as they should be for three causes. First, that they may be the sooner sued unto by lusty gallants: Secondly, because his denying ere of should nothing avail: for his wife which knows her daughters humours by her own, when shee was of the like years, will see that they shall want nothing: Thirdly they peradventure, bearing right womens minds, if their Father keep them short, will find some other friends that shall afford it them. The poor man being thus perplexed on all sides by reason of the excessive charges in which he must be at, will (as it is likely) be but honestly attired himself, not caring how he goes so he may but rub out, be it never so barely, and would be glad to scape so: But as the fish in the pond, which would also think himself well, though wanting former liberty, if he might be suffered to continue, is cut off before his time: So is likewise this poor man served, being once plunged in the perplexing pond, or rather pound of wedlock and house-keeping: for howsoever when he considers the aforesaid charges and troubles, he begins to have no joy of himself, and is no more moved than a tyred Jade, which forceth not for the spur: Yet for the furnishing of his wife and daughters, so that he may have peace at home, and enjoy an easie bondage, he must trudge up and down early and late about his businesse, in that course of life which he professeth.

Sometimes he journeys thirty or forty miles off, about his affaires: Another time twice so far to the Terme or Assises, concerning some old matter in law, which was begun by his grandfather, and not yet towards an end: he puts on a pair of boots of seven years old, which have been cobled so oft that they are now a foot too short for him, so that the top of the boot reaches no further than the calf of his leg, he hath a pair of spurs of the old making whereof the one wants a rowell, and the other for want of leathers, is fastned to his foot with a point: He puts a laced coat on his back, which he hath had six or seven years, which he never wore but upon high dayes, whose fashion is grown clean out of request, by reason of new invented garments: whatsoever sports

or

or pleasures he lights on by the way on his journey) he takes no joy in them because his mind is altogether on his troubles at home: he fares hardly by the way, as also his poor horse (if he have one) his man follows him in a turn'd suite with a sword by his side, which was found under a hedge at the siege of Bulleine; he hath a coat on his back, which every man may know was never made for him, or he not present when it was cut out: for the wings on his shoulders come down half way his arm, & the skirts as much below his waist; To be short, the poor man goeth every way as near as may be, for he remembers at what charges he is at home, and knows not what it will cost him in seeing his Counsellors, Attorneys, Pettyfoggers, which will do nothing without present pay: he dispatcheth his business speedily and hies him home, with such haste to avoid greater charges, that he rests no where by the way. And hereby it chanceth that many times he comes home at such an hour, as is as neer morning as to night, and findes nothing to eat, for his wife and servants are in bed, all which he takes patiently, being now well used to such entertainment: Surely for my part, I think that God sends such adversity and distress to those only whose good and mild nature he knowes to be such, that they will take all things in good part.

But to proceed, it is very likely that the poor man is very weary, his heart heavy, by reason of the care and thought which he hath of his business: and it may be (he looks to be welcome to his own house, and there to refresh himself) howsoever he forgets not his former usage. But it falls out otherwise, for his wife begins to chide, whose words carry such a sway with the servants, that whatsoever their master saith, they make small account of it: but if their mistress command any thing, it is presently done, and her humour followed in all things, else must they pack out of service; so that it boots not him to bid them do any thing, or rebuke them for not doing it: And his poor man that hath been with him dares not likewise open his mouth to call for any victualls to comfort himself, or for the horses, lest they should suspect him to be of his masters faction (who being wise and of a quiet mild nature) is loth to make any stir, or breed any disquietnesse in the house, and therefore takes all in good part, and sits down far from the fire, though hee be very cold: But his wife and children stand round about it, but all

their eyes are cast on her, who looks on her husband with an angry countenance, not caring to provide ought for his supper: but contrariwise taunts him with sharp and shrewd speeches, whereto for the most part, he answers not a word, but sometimes (perhaps being urged through hunger or wearinesse, or the unkindnes of his wife) he doth thus utter his mind. Wel wife you can look wel enough to your self, but as for me, I am both weary and hungry, having neither eaten nor drunk all this day, and being beside wet to the very skin, yet you make no reckoning to provide any thing for my supper.

Ah quoth she) you do well to begin first, lest I should, which have most cause to speak: have you not done very wel (think ye) to take your Man with you, and leave me no body to white the cloaths? Now before God, I have more losse in my linnen, than you will get this twelve-month: Moreover, you shut the Hen-Roost doors very well. Did you not? When the Fox got in, and eat up four of my best brood Hens, as you (to your cost will soon find) by the masse, if you live long you will be the poorest of all your kin. Wel wife (saith the good man) use no such words, I pray you. God be thanked I have enough, and more shall have when it pleaseth him: and I tell you, I have good men of my kin. But quoth she, I know not where they be, nor what they are worth. Well saith he) they are of credit and ability too. But for all that (quoth she) they do you small good. As much good (saith he) as any of yours. As any of mine (saith she) and that she spake with such a high note, that the house rung withall saying: By cocks soul, were it not for my friends you would do but scurvily.

Well, good wife (saith he) let us leave this talk: Nay (saith she) if they heard what you say, they would answer you well enough. The good man holds his peace, fearing lest she should tell them, being of greater ability then he was; and besides, because he was loth that they should be offended with him. Then one of the three children falls a crying, and he perhaps which his father loved best, thereupon the mother presently took a rod, turned up the childs tail, and whipt him well favouredly, and the more to despight, anger her husband than for ought else. The good man being herewith somewhat moved, willed her to leave beating the child, shewing by his bended brows that he was not a little angry at her doings. Now (quoth she with a murren (quoth she) you are not troubled with them, they cost you nothing, but it is

I that have all the pains with them night and day. Then comes in the Nurse with her verdict, and thus she begins, saying; O sir, you know not what a hand she hath with them & we alls that tend them. Then coms in the chamber maid with her five egs, In good faith sir it is a shame for you, that at your coming home, when all the whole house should be glad thereof, that you should contrary wise put it thus out of quiet: saith he (Is it I that make this stir?)

Then is the whole household against him, when he seeing himselfe thus baited on all sides, (and the match so unequall,) gets him to bed quietly without his supper, all wet and dirty; or if he do sup, he hath but thin fare: and being in bed where he should take his rest, he is so disquieted with the children, whom the nurse and his wife do on purpose set on crying, to anger him the more, that for his life he cannot sleep one wink.

Thus is he vexed with continual troubles, wherewith he seemeth to be well pleased, and would not though he might be free from them but doth therein spend his miserable and unhappy life.

## CHAP. V. The humour of a woman that marries her inferiour by birth.

A Woman inclined to another kind of humour, which is, when the husband hath been married, and hath passed so many troubles, that he is wearied therewith, his lusty youthfull blood grown cold, is matched with a wife of better birth then himselfe, and perhaps younger, both which things are very dangerous, and no wise man should seek his own spoil, by wrapping himselfe in either of those bonds, because they are so repugnant, that it is both against reason and nature to accord them. Sometimes they have children, sometimes they have none; yet this notwithstanding, the wife can take no pains, yet must be maintained according to her degree, to the husbands exceeding charges: for the furnishing whereof, the poor man is forced to take extream toil and pains, and yet for all this thanks God for vouchsafing him so great a grace, as to be matcht with her: If now and then they grow to hot words together (as oft it happens) then presently in upbraiding and menacing sort, she tells him that her friends did not match her to him to be his drudge, and that she knows well enough of what linage she is come, and will

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brag withal, that when shee list to write to her friends and kinsmen, they will presently fetch her away. Thus doth she keep him in awe, and in a kind of servitude, by telling him of them, who would perhaps have matcht her better, and not with him, but for some privy scape that she hath had before, whereof the poor soul knows nothing; or if perhaps he hath heard some inkling thereof, yet because he is simple, the credit that he might give thereunto is quite dasht, by a contrary tale of others suborn'd by them, who perchance will not stick to swear that this is a slaunder rais'd by evill tongues, and forg'd maliciously against her, as the like is done against many other good women whose good names are wronged, & brought in question by bad persons on their tripling bench because themselves cannot obtain their purpose of them: notwithstanding, if her husband be not able to maintain her according to her mind, then will she be sure to have a friend in store that shall afford it her, if her husband deny it, and in the end she remembers that such a Gentleman at such a fersit proffered her a Diamond, or sent her by a messenger some twenty or thirty crowns, which she as then refused, but now purposeth to give him a kind glance to renew his affection, who conceiving some better hope, and meeting soon after with her Chamber-maid, as shee is going about some businesse, calls to her, saying: Sister I would fain speak with you. Sir quoth she say what you please. You know (quoth he) that I have long loved your Mistresse without obtaining any favour: but tell me I pray you, did she never speak of me in your hearing? In faith Sir (saith he) never but well: I dare swear she wishes you no harm. Before God sister, saith the Gentleman, if you will shew me some kindnesse herein, and do my commendations to your mistresse, assuring her of my love and loialty, it shall bee worth a new gown unto you, mean while take this in earnest; with that he offers her a peece of gold; she then making a low curtsie saith Sir, I thank you for your good will, but will not take it; By my faith, saith he, but you shall, and with that he forceth it on her; adding these words: I pray you let me hear from you to morrow morning. She being glad of such a booty hies her home, and tels her mistris how she met with a gentleman that was in a passing good vein, & to be short, after some questions used by her mistris, it appears to be the very same man whom she would fain entrap. I tell thee, saith she to her maid if he be as kind as he is proper, he were worthy to be any wo-

mans love. Believe me mistris (saith the maid) his very countenance shews that he is kind, it seemes that he was only made for love, and withall he is wealthy, and thereby able to maintain her beauty and her person in bravery whom he affects. By this light (saith the mistris) I can get nothing of my husband. The more unwise you (saith the maid) to be used so. Alas quoth she, what shall I do? I have had him so long, that I cannot now set my heart on any other. Tush (quoth the maid) it is a folly for any woman to set her heart so on any man, for you know they care not how they use us when they are once lords over us. Beside your husband, though he would, yet he cannot maintain and keep you according to your degree: but he of whom I speak will furnish and maintain you gallantly, what garments soever he will have: and what colour and fashion soever you like best you shall presently have it, so that there wants nothing else, save only a quaint excuse to my Master, making him believe you had it by some other means. By my troth quoth her mistris. I know not what to say. Well Mistris (saith the maid) advise you well, I have promist to give him an answer to morrow morning. Alas (saith the other) how shall we do? Tush mistris, answers the maid, let me alone: As I go to morrow to the market, I am sure he will watch to meet with mee, that he may know what news: then I will tell him that you will not agree to his desire for fear of discredit, this will give him a little hope and so we shall fall into further talke, and I doubt not but to handle the matter well enough. According to promise next morning to market she hies, somewhat more early than she was wont, and by the way she meets with this lusty gallant, who had waited for her at least three hours: he hath no sooner spied her, but he presently makes towards her, and at her comming thus salutes her: Sister, good morrow, what news I pray, and how doth your fair Mistris? In faith sir, (saith she) she is at home very pensive and out of patience; I think that never any woman had such a froward husband. Ah villain (saith hee) the Devill take him. Amen (saith the maid) for both my mistris and all the servants are weary with tarrying with him. Out on him slave (saith he) but I pray you tell me what answer gave your Mistris touching my suit? In faith (quoth shee) I spake unto her, but shee would not agree thereunto, for she is wonderfully afraid to purchase her selfe discredit, and is besides plagued with such a froward and sulki-

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tious husband, and although shee were never so willing, yet could shee not, being continually watcht by him, his mother and brethren: I think on my conscience, unlesse that it were that she spake to you the other day, the poor wo man talkt not with any man these four months; yet shee speaks very often of you, and I am well assured, that if she would bend her minde to love, she would chuse you before all men in the World. He being ravished with these words, replyes thus: Sweet sister, I pray you be my friend herein, and I will always rest at your command. In good faith (saith shee) I have done more for you already, then ever I did for any man in my life. And think not (saith he) that I will be unmindfull of your kindnesse, but what would you counsell mee to do? In faith sir (saith shee) I think it best that you should speak with her your self, and now you have an excellent opportunity, for my master hath refused to give her a gown, whereat she stormes not a little, you shall do well therefore to bee to morrow at the Church, and there salute her, telling her boldly your desire: you may also offer her what you think good, but I know shee will take nothing: marry shee will think the better of you, knowing thereby your frank and bountifull nature. Oh (saith he) I would shee would gladly take that which I would gladly bestow on her. Nay, answers the maid, I know she will not, for you never knew a more honester woman: but I'le tell you how ye may do it afterwards: Look what you purpose to bestow upon her, you shal deliver unto mee, I will do my best to perswade her to take it, but I cannot assure you that I shall prevail. Surely sister (saith hee) this is very good counsell, herewithall they part, and she returns home, laughing to her self; which her mistris seeing, demands of her the cause thereof. Marry (saith the maid) this lusty gentleman is all on fire to morrow he will be at Church, purposing there to speak with you: now must you demean your self wisely, and make very strange of it, but stand not off too much, least you dismay him clean: as you will not wholly grant, so must you feed him with some hope. Shee having her lesson thus taught by her maid gets her up betimes the next morning, and to the Church she goes, where this amorous Gallant hath waited for her comming ever since four a clock. Shee being set in her Pew, makes shew as if she were devoutly at her prayers, when (God wot) her devouting is bent to the service of

another Saint: it were worth the noting to see how like an image she sits: and yet for all her demureneſſe, shee applyes all her five senses, and that full zealously in this new humour of religion. To be short, he steals into her, sneaking into her, from the belfrey into her Pew, and being come greetes her after the amorous order, and from greeting he falls to courting. whereto she doth in no wise yield consent, neither will she take ought that he offers, yet answers him after such a sort that he doth assuredly gat her that she loveth him thereby, and sticks only for fear of discredit: whereat he is not a little jocond, and having spent his time to so good a purpose, he takes his leave, and she hasting home to her Counsellour, acquaints her what hath passed between them; who thereupon takes occasion to say thus Mistrisse, I know well that now he longs to speak with me, but at our meeting I will tell him that you will yield to nothing, for which I will faine my self sorry: And will adde withall, that my master is gone out of town, and will appoint him to come hither towards the evening, with promise that I will let him in, and convey him so secretly into your Chamber, that you shall know nothing thereof. At what time you must seem to be highly offended, and if you be wise, you will make him buy his pleasure with some cost, which will cause him to esteem the more of you; Tell him that you will cry out, and then do you call me: By handling him thus, I can assure you that you shal get more of him, than if you had pleased at the first. All this while I will have in my keeping that which he will give you, for hee hath appointed to deliver it me to morrow, and I will make him believe, that you would by no means take it. But when the matter is brought to this passe, then will I make shew to offer you his gift before him, telling you that he is willing to bestow it on you to buy you a gown-cloth withall: Then must you chide, and seeme to bee angry with me for receiving it, charging me to deliver it back again to him, but be sure I will lay it up safe enough. Well devised wench (saith the Mistresse) I am content it shall be so. This plot being thus laid, the crafty wench goes presently to find out this jolly Gallant, whose first word is, What newes?

Now in good faith Sir (saith she) the matter is no further forwards, then if it were yet to begin: yet because I have medled so far in it, I would be loth I should not bring it about, for I fear that she will complain of me to her husband and friends; but if I could perswade

ſwade her by any means to receive your gifts, then out of queſtion the matter were diſpatcht, and in good faith I'le try once more: I have one good help, and that is this: my maſter (as I told you before) will not give her a new gown, at which unkindneſſe, ſhe ſcorns mightily.

The hot Lover hearing this, gives her preſently twenty Crowns for her good will, whereupon ſhe ſpeaks thus: In good faith ſir, I know not how it comes to paſſe, but ſure I am, I never did ſo much for any man before, as I have done herein for you: See, ſee Sir, what danger I have put my ſelf in for your ſake; for if my Maſter ſhould have any inckling of it, I were utterly undone: yet for you I will hazard a little further: I know ſhe loves you well, as good hap is, my Maſter is not now in Town, if you therefore will be about the doores towards ſix of the clock at night, I will let you in, and ſo convey you ſecretly into my Miſtreſſes Chamber, who doth ſleep very ſoundly; for you know ſhe is but young: being there I could wiſh you go to bed to her, and for the reſt you need not (I truſt) any tutor: I proteſt that I know no other means for the compaſſing of this matter, perhaps it will ſadge: For it is a great matter when a lover and his miſtriſſe are both together naked in the dark, which doth help forwards a womans conceit to that which in the day time perhaps ſhe would harely grant. Oh my ſweet friend (qd. he) for this kindneſſe my purſe ſhall be at thy command. To be ſhort, night comes, he is there according to promiſe, whom ſhe ſtraight conveyes into her miſtriſſes chamber, then he preſently uncloaths himſelf and ſteps ſoftly into her bed, and being once in, he begins to imbrace her, whereat ſhe (that ſeems till then aſleep) ſtarts up on a ſudden, and with a fearfull voice askes who is there? it is I ſweet Miſtris, faith he, fear nothing. Ah (qd ſhe) think you to prevail thus? No, no, and with that ſhe makes as though ſhe would riſe, and calls her maid who anſwers not a word, but alas for pitty like an unnatiſull ſervant leaves her at her greateſt need. Whereforе (good woman) ſeeing that ſhe is forſaken, ſays with a ſigh. Ah me, I am betrayed: then begin they a ſtout battell, he urging his advantage, ſhe faintly reſiſting, but alas, what can a naked woman do againſt a reſolute lover? there is therefore no other remedy, but that at length (poor ſoul) being out of breath with ſtriving, ſhe muſt needs yield to the ſtronger: ſhe would fain have cryed out (God wot) had it not been for fear of diſcredit

Better then two years wages, and ſoon got.

Juſt as Jeroboam lipt.

credit: for thereby her name might have bin brought in question, therefore all things considered, she doth willingly, God knows, let him supply her husbands place, garnishing his Temples, for pure good will, with Acteons badge. Thus hath she got a new gown, which her good man refuses to give her, to blear whose eyes, and keep him from suspition, she gets her mother in her hands sight to bring home the cloath and give it her, as though it were her cost, & lest also he should suspect any thing she makes her believe she bought it with the mony which she got by selling od commodities which her husband knew not of: But it may be (and oft it happens so) that mother is privy to the whole matter, and a furtherer thereof. After this gown she must have another, and two or three gold imbroidered girdles, and other such costly knacks, which the husband seeing will in the end suspect somewhat, and begin to doubt of his wives honesty, or shall perhaps receive some advertisment thereof from some friend or kinsman: for no such matter can be long kept close, but in the end will by some means or other be made known and discovered: Then falls he into a frantick vein of jealousie, watching his Wives close packing: and for the better finding it out, she comes home on a sudden about midnight, thinking then to discover all, and yet perhaps may misse his purpose. Another time coming in at unawares he seeth something that he likes not, and then in a fury falls on railing, but be sure that she answers him home, not yielding an inch unto him; for besides the advantage of the sight, which is waged by her own trusty weapon (her tongue I mean she knowing withall that she is of better birth; bids him in the teeth therewith and threatens him to tell her friends how hardly she doth use her. To be short, the poor man shall never have good day with her, but either with thought of her incontinency, or if he speak to her, he is borne down with scolding lyes and despised of his own servants: his state runs to ruine, his health decayes, his body dryes up, and wears away with grief, he grows desperate and careless. Thus is he plunged in Lobs pound, wearied in a world of discontents, wherein notwithstanding he takes delight, having no desire to change his state, but rather if he were out, and knew what would follow, yet would he never rest till he had gotten in again, there to spend and end (as now he must) his life in grief and misery.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VI. The humour of a woman that strives to master her husband.

THe next humour whereunto a woman is addicted, is, when the husband hath got a fair young wife, who is proper and fine, in whom he takes great delight: yet perhaps she is bent altogether to crosse and thwart the man being of a kind and mild nature, loving her intirely & maintains her as well as he can, notwithstanding her frowardnes: It may be also that she hath a care of his credit and honesty and doth abhorre such lewdnesse as she of whom we spake before did use, yet hath she nevertheless an extream desire of Soveraignty, (which is known a common fault amongst women) and to be her husbands commander, a busie medler in his matters: be he a Judge, a Nobleman, or Gentleman she will take upon her to give sentence, and answer tutors, and whatsoever she doth he must stand to it.

This is (I say) a generall imperfection of women, be they never so honestly, never so kindly used, and have never so much wealth and ease to strive for the breeches, and be in odde contrary humours, of purpose to keep her husband in continuall thought and care how to please her.

He gets him up betimes in the morning, leaving her in bed to take her ease, while he stirs about the house and dispatcheth his businesse, look to the servants that they loyter not, causeth dinner to be made ready, the cloath to be laid, and when all things are ready, he sendsone to desire her to come down, who brings back answer that she is not disposed to dine. Nay (saith he) I will never sit down, nor eat a bit till she be here: So receiving his second message by his maid, or perhaps by one of his children, replies thus: Go tell him again that I will not dine to day. He hearing this, is not yet satisfied but sends likewise the third time, and in the end goes himself, and thus begins: How now, what ails you Wife, that you will eat no meat? hereto she answers not a word. The poor man marvells to see her in this melancholly dump, (although perhaps she hath plaid this pageant many times before) and useth all intreaty he may to know of her the cause thereof: but in vain, for indeed there is no cause at all, but only a meere mockery: Sometimes she will persist so obstinately in this humour, that for all the perswasions and kindnesse that he can use, she

will not come. Sometimes it may be she will, and then he must lead her by the hand like a Bride, and set her chair ready for her, mean while it is so long before he can get her down, that the meat is cold when it comes to the table. Being set, she will not eat one bit, and he saying that (like a kind Asse) will fast likewise: whereat she smiles inwardly, having brought him so to her bow, first in crossing him, then in making him to fast from dinner: wherein (to say the truth) she hath reason, for what needs a woman to seek his favour, who doth already love her, and shew her all the kindnesse that he can. Sometimes the good man riding abroad about his businesse, meets with two or three of his friends, with whom perhaps he hath some dealings, and hath been long acquainted with them: It may be also that he invites them home to his house, as one friend will do to another, and sends his man before to his wife to make all things ready in the best sort that she can for their entertainment: the poor serving-man gallops in such haste, that both himself and his horse is all on a sweat, when he comes home he doth his errand to his Mistris, telling her withall that the guests which his master brings are men of good account. Now by my faith (saith she) I will not meddle in it he thinks belike that I have nothing else to do, but drudge about to prepare banquets for his companions, he should have come himself with a vengeance and why did he not? Forsooth (saith the servant) I know not, but thus he bad me tell you. Go too (saith she) you are a knave that meddles in more matters than you have thank for. The poor fellow hearing this holds his peace, she in a fume flings up into her chamber, and which is worse, sends out her servants, some one way, some another: as for her maids, they have their lesson taught them well enough, knowing by custom how to behave themselves to weary their Master: well, he comes home with his aforesaid friends, calls presently for some of his servants: but one of the maids makes answer, of whom he demands whether all things be ready: In good faith Sir my Mistris is very sick, and here is no body else can do any thing: with that he being angry leads his friends into the Hall, or some other place according to his estate, where he finds neither fire made nor cloth laid. Judge then in what a taking he is, although it may be that his friends perceived by the sending of his man, that his commandments were not of such force as an act of Parliament. The good man being ashamed, calls and gapes first for

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one man, then for another, and yet for all this there comes none, except it be the sculion or some chare-woman, that doth use his house, whom his wife hath left there of purpose, because she knew they could serve to do nothing. Being herewith not a little moved, up he goes into his wives chamber, and thus he speaks unto her: Gods precious woman, why have you not done as I will'd ye? Why (saith she) you appoint so many things to be done, that I know not what to do. Before God (saith he) and with that he scratches his head, you have done me a greater displeasure than you think: these are the dearest friends that I have, and now here is nothing to set before them. Why (quoth she) what would you have me to do? I wis if you cast your cards well, you shall find that we have no need to make banquets: I would to God you were wiser, but sith you will needs be so lusty, even goe thorow with it your selfe on Gods name, for Ile not meddle with it. But what the Devil mean ye (saith he) to send all the servants abroad? Why (quoth she) what did I know that you would need them now? yet did she know it well enough, and had of purpose sent them forth on fruitlesse errands, the more to anger and despight him: who seeing that he can prevail nothing gives over talking to her, and gets him down in a bitter chafe: for it may be that his guests be of such account, and he so much beholding unto them, that he had rather have spent an hundred crowns than it should so have fallen out. But she cares not a whit, being well assured, that howsoever she thwarts him, he will hold his hands. and in scolding she knows her self to be the better. To be short, the poor man being vexed with shame and anger, runs up and down the house, gets as many of his servants together as he can: If his provision be but slender at home, he sends presently abroad; in the mean while he calls for a clean towel, the best table-cloth, and wrought napkins. But the maid answers him, that he can have none. Then up to his wife goes he again, and tells her that his friends doe intreat her to come down and beare them company shewing her what a shame it is, and how discourteously they will take it if she come not: And finally, he useth all the fairest speeches that he can to have her come, and to welcome and entertain them for his credits sake. Nay, in faith (quoth she) I will not come, they are too great states for my company, and no doubt they would scorn a poor woman as I am: It may be she will go, but in such sort, and with such a countenance,

that it had bẽn better for him she had not come at all. for his friends will somewhat perceive by her looks, and gesture, that howsoever they be welcome to the good man, she had rather have their roome than their company. But if she refuse to come (as it is the more likely) then will he aske her for the best towel, table-cloth, and napkins. Napkins (quoth she) as though these that be abroad already be not good enough for greater and better men than they are: when my brother or any of my kinsmen come, which are I wis their equals in every respect, they can be content to be served with them: but were these your guests never so great, yet could I not now fulfill your request though my life should lie on it: for since morning I have lost my keys of the great chest where all the linnen lies. I pray you bid the maid look for them, for in good truth I know not what I have done with them; and no marvel, for I have so much to do, that I know not how to bestir my self, well I wot, I have spoyled my self with continual care and trouble.

O hyar, hyar.

Now in good faith (quoth he) you have drest me fairly, but it is no matter: Before God Ile break open the Chest: Now surely then (quoth she) you shall do a great act, I would fain see you do it, I would for my part you would break all the Chests in the house. The poor man hearing her in these tearms, knows not well what to do, but takes that which he next lights on, and therefore shifts as well as he can; he causeth his guests to sit down at the table, and because the bẽr then abroach is on tilt, and therefore not very good, he bids one of the servants broach a new barrel and fill some fresh drink, but then there is neither tap nor spigget to be found, for his wife of purpose hath hidden them out of the way. Towards the end of the dinner he calls for cheese, and fruit, but there is none in the house, so that he is fain to send to his neighbours for the same, or else be utterly destitute: mean while his boy being at the table with the guests at last tells them how his Mistris fains her self sick, because she is not pleased with their Masters coming. Well, when bed time comes, he can get no clean sheets nor pillowbeers, because forsooth the keyes are lost, so that they must be content to lye in those that be foul and have bẽn long lain in. The next morning they get them gone betimes seeing by the good wives countenance that they are nothing welcome. By the way their lackies tell them what the Gentlemans boy reported, whereat they laught heartily, yet finde them-

selves

selves agrieved, vowing never to be his guest any more. The husband also getting him up betimes in the morning, goes presently to his wife, and thus begins: By Jesus wife, I muse what you mean to use me thus I know not how to live with you. Then she replies, saying: Now God for his mercy, am I so troublesome? God wot I am every day (poor soul) troubled with keeping your hogs, your Geese, your chickens, I must card, I must spin, and continually keep the house, look to the servants, and never sit still, but toyling up and down to shorten my days, and make me dye before my time, and yet I can not have one hours rest or quietness with you, but you are always brawling, and do nothing your selfe, but spend and waste your goods and mine with odde companions. What odde companions (saith he) as though you knew not that these are such men, as can either much further or much hinder me: It is a signe that you deal very well that you must stand in distress of such persons. Hereupon she takes occasion to raile and scold all the day long: the man being wearied with her wawardness, and age (being basted with grief and sorrow) doth unawares overtake him. Briefly, he is in every respect wretched: but such is his folly, that he reckons his pains pleasure, and would not, though he might be again at liberty, out of Lobs pound or if he would, it is now too late: for he must of force continue there, in care, thought, and misery, till death make an end of him and them together.

## CHAP. VII. The humour of a covetous minded Woman.

The next humour belonging to a woman is, when the Husband is matched to a modest civil woman, who is nothing given to that thwarting and crossing humour whereof I spake before. But be she good or bad, this is a general rule, many wives hold and stedfastly believe, that their own Husbands are worst of all others. It oft happens that when they match together, they are both young and entertain each other with mutual delights, so much as may be, for a year or two or longer, till the vigour of youth grow cold. But the woman droops not so soon as the man: the reason whereof is, because she takes no care, thought, nor grief, breaks not her sleep, and troubles not her head as he doth, but doth wholly addict her thoughts

to

to pleasure and solace. I deny not that when a woman is with child she bides many times great pains, and is often very ill at ease, and at the time of her deliverance, she is for the most part, not onely in exceeding pain, but also in no lesse danger of death: But all this is nothing to the husbands troubles, on whose hands alone doth rest the whole charge and weight of maintaining the house, and dispatching all matters, which is oftentimes intangled so with controversies, and so thwarted with crosse fortune, that the poor man is tormented with all vexation of minde.

Being thus wearied, and as it were worn away with continual grief, troublous cogitations, toyl and travel, he hath no mind on any other pleasure: whereas she on the other side is as lusty as ever she was: mean while his stock decays, and his state growes worse and worse: and as that diminisheth, so he must perforce shorten her allowance and maintenance, which is almost as great a Corosive to her, as the former: You may be well assured, that this change in him makes her also change her countenance from mirth and chearfulnesse, to lowring melancholy, seeking occasions of disagreements, and use them in such sort, that their former love and kindnesse was not so great, as are now their brawls, jars, and discords. It doth also oftentimes happen, that the Woman by this means wasts and consumes all, giving lewdly away her husbands goods, which he with great pains and cares hath gotten. The good man, he goes every way as neare as hee can, and warily contains himselfe within his bounds, casting up what his yearly revenues are, or what his gains is by his profession, be it merchandise or other, and then what his expences be: which he finding greater than his comings in, begins to bite the lip, and becomes very pensive: his wife and he being afterwards private together in their chamber, he speaks thereof unto her in this manner: In faith wife, I much marvel how it comes to pass that our goods go away thus, I know not how: I am sure I am as carefull as a man can be, I cannot finde in my heart to bestow a new cloake on my selfe, and all to save money. By my troth Husband (saith she) I do as much marvel at it as you I am sure for mine own part, that I go as neer in house-keeping every day as I can.

To be short, the poor man not doubting his wife, nor suspecting her ill carriage, after long care and thought concludes, that the cause thereof is his own ill fortune, which keeps him down, and crosseth

all

all his actions with contrary ſucceſſe, but it may be that in proceſſe of time, ſome friend of his (being more clear ſighted in the matter) perceiving all goes not well, doth privily informe him thereof, who being aſtoniſhed at his report, gets him home with a heavy countenance, which the wife ſeeing, and knowing her ſelf guilty, begins preſently to doubt the worſt, and perhaps gheſſeth ſhrewdly at the author thereof; but howſoever, ſhe will take ſuch an order, that ſhe will be ſure to eſcape the brunt well enough.

The good man will not preſently make any words hereof unto her, but defer it a while, and try in the mean time whether he can (of himſelfe) gather any further likelihood: for which purpoſe he will tell her, that he muſt needs ride ſome ten or twelve miles out of Town, about ſome earneſt buſineſſe. Good faith husband (ſaith ſhe) I had rather you ſhould ſend your man, and ſtay at home your ſelfe. Not ſo wife (ſaith he) but I will be at home again my ſelf within theſe three or four days: Having told her this tale, he makes as though he tok his journey, but doth privily lie in ambuſh in ſuch a place, where he may know whatſoever is done in the houſe: But ſhe ſmelling his drift, ſends word to her ſweet-heart, that he doe not come in any caſe, and all the time of his diſſembled abſence, ſhe carries her ſelf ſo, that it gives no likelihood of ſuſpition: which the ſilly man ſeeing, comes out of his ambuſh, enters his houſe, making as if then he were returned from his journey: And whereas before he lowred now he ſhews a cheerfull countenance, being verily perſwaded that his friends report is a meer lye, and that he thinks ſo much the rather, becauſe ſhe doth at his coming run to meet him, with ſuch a ſhew of love, and doth ſo imbrace and kiſſe him that it ſeems impoſſible ſo kind a creature ſhould play falſe: But long after (being in bed together) he thus ſpeaks to her:

Wife, I have heard reported certain words that like me not. Good faith husband (ſaith ſhe) I know not what is the cauſe thereof: I have noted this great while that you have bin very penſive, I was afraid that you had had ſome great loſſe, or that ſome of your friends had been kild, or taken by the Spaniard. No (ſaith he) that is not the matter, but a thing which grieves me more than any ſuch matter can do. Now God for his mercy (quoth ſhe) I pray you husband let me know what it is. Marry wife (ſaith he) a friend of mine told me that you kept company with R. R. the verieſt Ruffian in all the Town,

all

and a many other matters he told me of you. Hereat she crossing her selfe in token of admiration (though smiling inwardly) replies thus: Dear Husband, if this be all, then I pray you give over your pensiveness: I would to God I were as free from all other sins, as I am from that, then laying one hand on her head, she thus proceeds: I will not swear any thing touching him, but I would the Devill had all that is under my hand, if I ever touched any mans mouth saving yours, or some of our friends and kinsmen, or such at least as you have commanded me. Ha, ha, is this the matter? In troth I am glad that you have told me: I had verily thought it had been some greater matter, but I know well enough wherefore these speeches grew, and I would that you did likewise know, what moved him to speak them, I know you would not a little marvell, because he hath always professed such friendship towards you. In good faith I am nothing sorry that he hath awaked the sleeping dog. What mean you by that word (quoth he) Nay (quoth she) be not desirous to know it, you shall know it soon enough some other time. Why (saith he) I'le know it now. By my troth husband (saith she) I was oft wonderfully angry when you brought him hither, yet I forbare to speak of it, because I saw you loved him so well. But speake now (saith he) and tell me what the matter is. Nay, nay (quoth she) it skils not greatly. Go too wife (saith the good man) tell me or I will know it. Then takes she him about the neck, and sweetly kissing him, saith thus: Ah my dear Husband, what villaines are these that would seem to abuse you, whom I honour and love above all men in the world. Well Wife (saith he) I pray thee tell me the man that so misuseth us. In troth (quoth she) that vile dissembling Traitor, that flattering tell tale, that puts this bad report in your ears, in whom you esteem so much: reposing such great confidence in him, he is the only man and none but he, that hath earnestly urged me any time this two years to commit folly with him. But God (I praise him) hath given me grace both to refuse him and his offers, although I were continually troubled and importuned by him: I wis, when you thought he came hither so often for your sake, it was for this cause for never a time that he came but he was in hand with me to obtein his filthy desire till in the end I threatned to tell you of it, but I was loth to do it fearing to bred a quarrell between you, so long as I was sure to keep him from doing you herein any injury: Besides,

Oh brave dissembler.

almost as bad as Judas kisser.

The devill take the liar

Thus is he bor'd through the nose with a cushen.

I

I had ſtill a good hope, that he would at length give over: I wis it was no fault of his that he ſped not. Gods ſo my life (ſaith the good man) being in a great rage, what a treacherous villain is this? I would never have ſuſpected any ſuch matter in him, for I durſt have put my life in his hands. By this light Husband (ſaith ſhe) if ever he come more within the doors, or if ever I may know that you have any talk with him, Ile kæp house no longer with you. Ah dære Husband, and with that ſhe clips and cals him again about the neck, would I be ſo diſloyal as to abuſe you in this ſort? ſo ſweet, ſo amiable, ſo kinde a man, who lets me have my will in all things? God forbid I ſhould live ſo long to become a ſtrumpet now. But for Gods ſake Husband, forbid him your house, with whom this knave hath ſlandered me withal, yet I would the Devil had me if ever he made ſuch motion to me: nevertheleſſe, by Gods grace he ſhall not come henceforth in any place where I am and with that ſhe begins to wæpe, and he (kinde fool) doth appeaſe and comfort her, promiſing and ſwearing that he will do as ſhe will have him, ſave only that he will not forbid him his houſe, with whoſe company the other had charged her, and withall he vows, never to believe any more of theſe reports, nor ſo much as to hearken to any ſuch tales againe, notwithſtanding he ſtill fæls a ſcruple of ſuſpition in his conſcience: Within a while he begins to fall at defiance with his honeſt friend, who informed him of his Wives wantonneſſe, and he ſæms to be ſo dæply beſotted with her love that you would ſay hæ were transformed without inchantment, into Acteons ſhape: His charge of Houſhold ſtill encreaſeth, he hath many Children, and is perplexed on every ſide; but his Wife follows her pleaſure farre more than before, for though it be never ſo openly known, yet will no man tell him thereof, becauſe they know that he will not believe them, and (which is more ridiculous) hæ that abuſeth him moſt, ſhall bæ moſt welcome unto him of any. My be short, age will overtake him, and perhaps poverty, from the which he ſhall never be able to raiſe himſelf. Loe here the great good and pleaſure that he hath gotten by entring into Lobs pound every man mocks him; ſome ſay it is pitty becauſe he is an honeſt man: others ſay, it is not a matter to be ſorrowed for, ſith it is the common rule of ſuch. They of the better ſort will ſcorn his company. Thus lives he in pain, grief, and diſgrace, which he takes for great pleaſure, and therein will continue till death cut him off.

As kind as a Sea-crab, ſeizing on a dead carrion.

## CHAP. VIII. The humour of a woman that still desires to be gadding abroad.

THe next humour of a woman is, when the husband hath been in Lobs pound some five or six years, part whereof he hath spent in such pleasure as wedlock-duth at the first afford, but now the date of these delights is out, he hath perhaps some three or four children: but his wife is now big again, and a great deal worse of this childe than she was of any other: whereat the poor man grieves not a little, who takes great pains to get her that which she longs for: Well, the time of her lying down draws near, and she is wonderfully out of ten per: so that it is greatly feared that she will hardly escape. Then falls he on his knees, and prays devoutly for his Wife, who soon after is brought to bed, wherefore he is not a little jocond, making sure account that God hath heard his prayers. She-gossips, kinswomen and neighbours, come in troops to visit and rejoyce for her safe delivery. She for her part wants no good cherishing, whereby she recovers her strength, and is as fresh and lusty as ever she was.

After her Churching, she is invited by some of her neighbours, who also invites five or six others of her neighbors and friends, who is received and feasted with all kindeness; which Banquet doth perhaps cost her Husband more than would have kept the house a whole fortnight: Amongst other she propounds a question, or makes a match to go all together to a certain Fair, which will be within ten days at such a place, to the which place they shall have a most brave and pleasant journey, by reason of the fair weather, for they will always conclude such an agreement in some of the best seasons of the year, and she takes upon her to make this motion chiefly in regard of her Gossip, which was lately brought a bed, that she may after her long pain and travel somewhat recreate and refresh her self. But she answers her with thanks for her good will, saying, she knows not how to get leave of her Husband. What (saith the other) that is the least matter of a thousand. Tush Gossip (saith another) stand not upon that, we will all go and be merry, and we will have with us my Gossip G. T. my Cousin H.S. though perhaps he be nothing kinde to her: But this is their ordinary phrase, and they undertake this journey, because they cannot so well obtain their purposes

at home, being too near their Husbands noses. After this agreement, home she comes with a heavy countenance: The good man asketh what she aileth. Marry (quoth she) the Childe is very ill at ease, (though he were never in better health since he was born) his flesh burns as though it were fire, and as the Nurse tells me, he hath refused the dug these two days, although she durst not say so much till now. He hearing this, and thinking it true, is not a little sorry, goes presently to see his Childe, and weeps for pity.

Well, night comes, to bed they go, and then she fetching a sigh, begins thus: Husband, I see you have forgotten me. How mean you that, saith he? Marry (quoth she) do you not remember that when I was in childe-bed you said, that if it pleased God that I escaped, I should go to such a Fair with my Gossips and neighbours to make merry, and cheer up my self, but now I hear you not talk of it. In troth wife (saith he) my head is troubled with so many matters, and such a deal of business, that I have no leisure to think on any thing else: but there is no time past yet, the Fair will not be this fortnight. By my troth (quoth she) I shall not be well unless I go. Well wife (saith he) content your self: for if I can by any means get so much money ye shall go. You know it is not little that ye shall spend there: yea more I wis than will be my ease to lay out. God Christ (quoth she) is it now come to that? you promised me absolutely, without either ifs or ands: before God I will go, whether you will or no: for there goes my Mother, my Gossip T. my Cousin B. and my Cousin R. and his wife. If you will not let me go with them, I know not with whom you will let me go. He hearing her thus wilful, thinks it best for his own quietness, to let her go, though he strain his purse somewhat the more. The time comes, he hires horses, buys her a new riding gown, and doth furnish her according to her minde: peradventure there goes in their company a lusty Gallant, that will frollick it by the way on her Husbands cost, for his purse must pay for all. It may be he will go himself, because he hath never a man, or else cannot spare him from his work. But then is the poor man notably perplexed, for she will on purpose trouble him for every trifle more than she would do to another: because it doth her good to make a drudge of him, and so much the rather, that he may not afterwards have any desire to go abroad with her again.

Sometime her stirrop is too long, sometimes too short: and he

must ſtill alight to make it fit: ſometimes ſhe will wear her cloak, ſometimes not, and then he muſt carry it. Then finds ſhe fault with her horſes trotting, which makes her ſick, and then ſhe will alight and walk on foot, leaving him to lead the horſes. Within a while after they come to a water, then muſt he be troubled to help her up again. Sometimes ſhe can eat nothing that is in the Inne, then muſt he (being weary all day with riding) trudge up and down all the Town, to finde ſomething that will fit her ſtomack: All which notwithſtanding, ſhe will not be quiet: and not ſhe onely, but her Goſſips alſo will be bobbing and quipping him, ſaying that he is not worthy to be a womans man. But he is ſo inured to theſe janglings that he cares not for all their friuolous words.

Well at length to the Fair they come, and then muſt he play the Squire in going before her, making ſo much room for them as he can, when there is any throng or preſſe of people, being very chary of his wife, leſt ſhe ſhould be hurt or annoyed by thruſting. There moyles he like a Horſe, and ſweats like a Bull, yet cannot all this pleaſe her. Some Dames of the company, which are more ſtuſh in crowns than her good man, beſtows money on Gold Rings, Hats, ſilk Girdles, Jewels, or ſome ſuch toyes; yea, coſtly toyes, which ſhe no ſooner ſees, but preſently ſhe is on fire, until ſhe have the like. Then muſt he herein content her (if he love his own eaſe) and have he mony or not ſome ſhift muſt be made to ſatiſfie her humor. Well now imagine them going homewards, and think his paine and trouble no leſſe, than it was coming forth: her Horſe perhaps doth ſtumble much, or trots too hard, which is peradventure by reaſon of a nail in his foot, or ſome other miſchance. Then muſt he perforce buy, or hire another Horſe: and if he have not money enough to do ſo, then muſt he let her ride on his, and he trot by her ſide like a Lackey. By the way ſhe will aſk for twenty things, for milk becauſe ſhe cannot away with their drink: for pears, plumbs, and cherries: When they come near a Town he muſt run before to cheoſe out the beſt Inne: ever and anon as ſhe rides, ſhe will of purpoſe let fall her hand, her maſk and gloves, or ſome thing elſe, for him to take up, becauſe ſhe will not have him idle: When they are come home, ſhe will for a fortnight together doe nothing elſe but gad up and down amongſt her Goſſips, to tell them how many gay and ſtrange things ſhe hath ſeen, all that hath paſſed by the way, in going and coming

but

but especially of her good man, whom she will be sure to blame, saying, that he did her no pleasure in the world, and that she poor soul, being sick and weary, could not get him to help her, or to provide any thing for her that she liked: And finally, that he hath had no more care of her, than if she had been a mere stranger.

But he (poor sot) finding at his return all things out of order, is not a little troubled to set them in due frame again, and toylas exceedingly at his labour, that he may recover his charges which he hath been at in this journey. But she, what for gossipping, for pride, and idleness, will not set her hands to any thing: And yet if ought go well, she will say that it was through her heedfulnes and good huswifery. If otherwise, then will she scold & lay the fault thereof on him, although it be her own doings. To be short, having thus gotten a vain of gadding, she will never leave it, and hereby the poor man will be utterly spoiled, for both his substance shall be wasted, his limbs through labour fill'd with aches, his feet with the gout, & age comes on him before his time: yet as though this were not evil enough, she will be continually brawling, scolding, & complaining, how she is broken through child-bearing. Thus is the silly man up to the ears in Lobs pound, being on each side beset with care and trouble, which he takes for pleasure, and therein languisheth whiles he lives.

## CHAP. IX. The humour of a curst Quean, married to a froward Husband.

THe next humour that is incident to a woman, is, when the husband having entred very young into Lobs pound and there fettered himself by his too much folly, for a vain hope of tickish delights, which lasted but for a year or two, hath matched himself with a very froward and perverse woman (of which sort there are too many) whose whole desire is to be Mistris, and to wear the breeches or at least to bear as great a sway as himself. But he being crafty, and withal crabbed, will in no wise suffer this usurped soveraignty but with sundry matters withstands it. And there hath bin great stir and arguing about this matter between themselves, and now and then some battels: but do she what she can either with her tongue or hands, notwithstanding their long controversie, which hath perhaps lasted at the least these twenty years, he is still victorious and holds his right: but you must think that his striving for it all this

while, hath been no small trouble and vexation unto him, beside all other aforesaid evils. All which, or part thereof, he hath likewise endured. Well, to be short, he hath perchance three or foure children all married, and by reason of the great pains and travel that he hath taken in bringing them up, providing them portions, maintaining his wife, increasing his stock, or at least keeping it from being diminished, and living with credit amongst his neighbours: At last it may be he hath gotten the gout, or some other dangerous disease, and withall is grown old, and thereby feeble: so that being set, he can hardly rise, through an ach that he hath got in his arms or legs: Then is their long war come to an end, and the case (as Ployden saith) clean altered: For his wife being younger than he, and as frolick as ever she was, will now be sure to have her own will in despight of his beard: Hereby the poor man which hath maintained the combate so long, is now utterly put down: his own children, which before he kept in awe well enough, will now take heart to themselves, and if he reprove them for their lewdnesse and disobedience, she will maintain them against him to his teeth, which must needs be a great grief unto him.

But besides all this, he is in doubt of his servants; for they likewise neglect their former duty, and lean altogether to their Mistris: so that he poor man, which now by reason of his sicknesse, and feeblenesse of body, hath more need of attendance than ever he had, shall have but very little or none at all: For though he be as wise and as carefull as ever he was, yet sith he cannot bestir himself to follow them as he was wont, they contemn and make no more reckoning of him, than if he were a meer fool.

Then peradventure his eldest son, thinking that his father lives too long, will take upon him to guide the house, and dispose all things at his pleasure, as if his father were become an innocent, and could no longer look to things as he was wont: Judge you whether the good man seeing himself thus abused by his wife, children and servants, be grieved or not. If he purpose to make his Will, they will seek all means to keep him from doing it, because they hear an inkling, that he will bestow somewhat on the Parish, or will not bequeath his wife so much as she would have.

To be short, that they may make an end of him the sooner, they will many times leave him in his Chamber half a day and more with-

without meat, fire, or ought else, not one of them coming to see what he wants, or to do him any service: his wife is weary of him by reashn of his spitting, coughing, and groaning.

All the love and kindenesse which he had in former times shewed unto her, is quite forgotten; but his strife for superiority, and his crabbednesse towards her (when she had justly moved him) this she can still as well remember, as when it was first done: Neither will she spare to prate thereof to her neighbours: telling them that he hath been a bad man, and that she hath led such a life with him, that if she had not been a woman of great patience, she could never have endured to keep house with so crabbed a churl.

She will likewise boldly reproach, and twit him in the teeth with those former matters, for it doth yet shrewdly stick in her stomack, that she could not till now be Mistris. But he that was wont to charm her tongue, and keep her under, who seeing him now in his distresse and weaknesse, takes advantage, and continues his bad usage: Seeing also his Children, which should fear and reverence him, taking part with their Mother, being taught and set on by her: seeing this (I say) and being no lesse angry than griever, he calls some of them in a rage, and when they are come before him, thus begins he to his wife.

Wife, you are she, whom by the laws of God and man, I should love and esteem more than any thing else in the world, and you on the other side should bear the like affection to me: but whether you do so or not, I refer it to your own conscience: I tell you I am not well pleased with your using me thus: I think you take me still for the Master of the house as before you have done, but whether you think so or not, be sure I will be Master while I live, yet you I thank you, do use me and account of me in very slight manner: I have alway loved you well, never suffered you to lack that which was meet: I have in like sort loved, and also maintained your Children and mine, according to my degree, and now both you and they do very unkindely requite me.

Why (saith she) What would you have us to do? We do the best we can, but you cannot tell your self what you would have. The better we use you, and the more we tend you, the worse you are, but you were never other, always brawling, and never quiet, never pleased full nor fasting: I think never woman was so long troubled with a croaked Pestle as I have been.

Ah,

Ah Dame (saith he) leave these words I pray you: then turning him to his eldest son, he said: Son, I have marvelled at your behaviour of late towards me, and I tell you I am not well pleased therewith: You are my eldest, and shall be mine heir, if you behave your self as a Childe ought to do: But you begin already to take state upon you, and to dispose of my goods at your pleasure: I would not wish you to be so forward, but rather while I live, to serve and obey me as it becomes you to do: I have been no bad father unto you, I have nothing impaired or diminished, but increast that which was left me by my Father, which if you do your duty to me (as I ought mine to him) I will leave to you after my decease as he left to me: but if you continue in your stubbornesse and disobedience, before God (I swear) I will not bestow one peny or crosse upon thee.

Here his wife begins again to thwart him: Why, what would you have him do? it is impossible for any one to please you; he shall have enough to do that shall always tend you: I wis it is high time that you and I were both in Heaven, you know not your self what you would have, I marvel what you all. Well, well (saith he) I pray you be quiet, do not maintain him thus against me, but it is always your order.

After this, the Mother and Son departing, consult together, and conclude, that he is become a childe again, and because he hath threatned to disinherit them, they resolve that no man shall be suffered to come and speak with him: His son takes upon him more than before, being born out by his Mother; who together with him, makes every one believe that the poor man is become childish, and and that he hath lost both his sense and memory.

If any of his honest friends and former acquaintance, which were wont to resort unto him, come now to ask for him, his Wife will thus answer them: Alas he is not to be spoken with, and when he demands the cause thereof, doubting he is dangerously sick: Ah good neighbour (saith she) he is become an Innocent, even a Child again, so that I poor soul, must guide all the house, and take the whole charge of all things upon me, having none to help me: but God be praised for all.

In faith (saith the other) I am very sorry to hear this, and do much marvel at it, for it is not long since I saw him, I spoke with him, and

then

then he was in as good memory, and spake with as good sense & reason as ever he did before. In truth (saith she) he is now as I tell ye.

Thus doth she wrong and slander the poor man, which hath always lived in good credit, and kept his houshold in very good order: but you may be well assured, that he seeing himself in his age thus despised and injured, and being not able to remedy himself, nor stir without help from the place where he is, thereby to acquaint his friends therewith, which might in his behalf redress it, is not a little grieved, vexed, and tormented in his mind, with sorrow and anger: So that it is a great marvel he falls not into despair: For it is enough to make a Saint become impatient to be used thus by those which should obey, serve and honour him. And in my opinion this is one of the greatest torments that any man can feel: such is the issue of this great haste and extreme desire to be in Lobs pound, where he must now remain perforce, till death do end (at once) both his life and languishing.

## CHAP. X. The humour of a Woman given to all kinde of pleasures.

Another humour incident to a woman by nature, is, when the husband (thinking that wedlock was of all estates the happiest, and altogether replenished with delight and pleasure) because he saw some of his friends, who for a while after they were married, were very chearful & jocond, never ceaseth toyling and turmoyling himself till he hath gotten into Lobs pound, wherein he is presently caught fast like a bird in a net: for this comparison, if we do examine the particulars thereof, doth very fitly resemble his estate. The silly birds which flie from tree to tree and from field to field to seek meat, when they see a great deal of Corne spilt on the ground, thinke themselves well apaid, and without any fear some hither to feed thereon picking up the grains of corn, but alas they are deceived, for on a sudden the net is drawn and they are all fast tied by the legs, and thence carried in a sack or panier one upon another to the fowlers house, then coopt up in a cage. Oh how happy would they think themselves, if they were againe at their former liberty to flie whither they list. but they wish too late: yet were this all the evil that they should indure it were well, but (which is worse) they shall soon after have their necks wrung off, & their little bodies spitted to be made meat for men to eat.

But they are herein far more simple than the Birds, for they being fast in Lobs pound, and so besotted with their own sorrows, that they have no Power to free themselves: So likewise they have no will to be it. But to proceed; the wife not loving her husband, for some defect which is in him, that she may have some colour for that she doth, makes her mother and other friends which blame her for it, believe, that her husband is bewitcht; and by reason of some Sorcery, made for the most part impotent; hereupon she complains of her ill fortune, resembling it to those, which having the Cup at their noses cannot drink: mean while she hath a sweet-heart in a corner, who is not bewitched, who useth her company so long, and with so little hed, that in the end her husband perceives it, and falling into the vain of jealousie, beats her well-favouredly, and keeps a foul stir both with blows and words, so that she not liking his usage, gives him the slip, but then is he clean out of patience, and so husbands in this taking are so mad, that they never lin seeking them, and would give half they are worth to finde her again: who having thus plaid the pageant, and seeing her husbands humour, compacts with her mother, whose good will she will be sure to get by one means or other (whereas at the first she will perhaps think hardly of her departure from her husband) she doth, I say, so handle the matter with her that she will make the good man believe her daughter hath been all this while at home with her, and that she came to shun his bad usage, who (had she tarried with him till then) had been lamed for ever.

Before God (quoth she) I had rather you should restore her again to me, than beat her thus without cause, for I know that you suspect her wrongfully, and that she hath never offended you: I wis I have straitly examined her about it, but if she would have been naught, you did enough to provoke her: By Gods passion, I think few women could have born it. Well (it may be) that upon these or the like tearms he takes her againe: it may be also that they are both desirous to be divorced, each accusing other, and seeking to winde themselves again out of Lobs pound, but in vaine. For either the causes that they alledge are not thought sufficient by the Judge, how hard soever they plead, but must of force continue still together, are laughed to scorn of all that hear the cause: or if they be separated, yet will not all this let them free, but rather plunge them in deeper than

than before, but neither of them can marry whiles the other lives, and their chastity so brittle (especially hers) that holds it cannot, nor long endure.

She who was wont to be so frolick, must needs continue so still. Nay peradventure, being now without controlment, follows her evil and lewd life more freely than before: and whereas she was but earst a private Queane, she is now common in the way of Gondelowship, or else some lusty Gallant takes her into his house, and shelters her by his nose, which must needs be unto him an exceeding inward grief, and an open disgrace and shame in the eyes of the world; and which is worse, he knows not how in the world to remedy it, but must perforce indure both, while this miserable life doth last.

## CHAP. XI. The humour of a woman to get her Daughter a Husband, having made a little wanton escape.

The next humour that a woman is addicted unto, is, when a lusty young Gallant riding at pleasure up and down the Countrey, but especially to those places of sports and pleasure where the finest Dames and dainty Girles met, who can finely mince their Measures, having their tongues trained up to all kinde of amorous chat; in which delightfull exercises, this Youngster both by reason of his youth, his loose bringing up, and natural inclination, takes a great felicity in such vain company: and so much the rather, because he findes himself always welcomed, and kindly entertained to such places, and the reason is the comelinesse of his person, his amiable countenance, and quaint behaviour: for whosoever hath these good helps, shall want no favour at Womens hands. It may be also, that his parents are still living, and he their onely joy, they having perhaps no Child but him, so that all their most delight is in maintaining him bravely. It may be also, that he is newly come to his Lands, and loves to see fashions, though it cost his purse never so largely. If any Gentlewoman offer any kindnesse, he is ready to requite it: and at length through long passing to many places, he lights on one that doth exceedingly please his eye, and inflame his heart: she is perhaps Daughter to some Gentleman, some Citizen, or some worthy Farmer. She hath a cleare com-

plexion, a fine proportion, a wanton eye, a dainty tongue, and a sharp wit; by reason of all which good gifts, she is grown very famous. She hath been woed, sued, and courted by the bravest Gallants in the Country; of whom perhaps some one being more forward and courageous than the rest, hath offered her such kindnesse, as sticks by the ribs a good while after, and would needs inforce this courtesie with such importunity, that she had not the power to resist it: for a woman that hath her fine wits, if she be withall of a cheerfull sanguine complexion, cannot be so unkind, or so hard-hearted as to deny, or repulse the petition of an amorous Friend, if he do any thing earnestly prosecute the same. And (to be plain) be she of what complexion soever, she will be nothing slack to grant such a suit.

But to return to our purpose, by reason of her tender compassion, and kinde acceptance of his proffered service, it so falls out she hath plaid false, then is there no other shift but to keep it both secret and close: and to take such order as they best can, for smothering up of the matter. He that hath done the deed, being a proper young man, though proper of boy, and perhaps can dance very well, by which good quality he won her favour, and within a while after crept the flower of her maidenhead: he (I say) after a check or two, and no further matter (lest this privy scape should be openly known) is warned from coming any more to the house, or frequenting her company whatsoever.

But now you must note, that she being but a simple girle, betwixt fourteen and fifteen years of age, nothing expert, but rather a novice in such matters, and having been but lately deceived, knows not her self how it is with her: But her Mother which by long experience hath gotten great judgement, both by her colour, her complaining of pain at her heart and stomack, with other like tokens, perceive it well enough, and having (as before I said) cashiered the Author of the action: Then takes she her daughter aside, and schools her so, that in the end she confesseth that he hath been dallying with her, but she knows not whether to any purpose or not. Yes (saith her Mother) it is to such purpose, as by these signes I know very well, that you have thereby both shamed your self, and all our friends, and spoiled your marriage quite and clean.

To be short, having somewhat chid her after the common order, for having no more respect nor care of her honesty, (yet not chiding very

very extreamly, because she knows the frailty of youth by her own former experience) she concludes thus comfortably: Sith it is done, and cannot be altogether remedied, shee will seek both to hide and salve the matter as well as she can, charging her Daughter to set a good countenance on it, lest it should bee suspected, and to follow her counsell and commandement in all things: Whereupon the poore Wench willingly consenteth, then the Mother procéeds thus:

You know Master T. A. that cometh hither so often, he is you see a proper Gentleman, and a rich Heire, to morrow he hath appointed to be here againe: Looke that you give him good entertainment, and shew him good countenance. When you see me and the rest of our Guests talking and discoursing together, ever and anon cast your eyes on him, in the kindest and lovingest manner that you can: If he séeme desirous to speak with you, be not coy, but heare him willingly, answer him courteously. If he intreat love of you, tell him that you know not what it means, and that you have no desire at all to know it; yet thank him for his good will; for that Woman is too uncourteous and uncivill, which will not vouchsafe the hearing or gently answering to those that love her and wish her well.

If he offer you money, take none in any case if a ring, or a girdle, or any such thing, at the first refuse it, yet kindely and with great thanks: but if he urge it on you twice or thrice, take it, telling him sith that he will néeds bestow it on you, you will wear it for his sake. Lastly, when he takes his leave, ask him when he will come again: These instructions being thus given, and the plot laid for the fetching in of this kinde fool into Lobs pound:

The next day he commeth, and is on all hands more kindely welcome and entertained: after dinner, having had great chéer, the Mother falls in talk with the other guests, and this frollicke Novice gets him as néer to her Daughter as he can, and while the other are hard in chat, he takes her by the hand, and thus begins to court her:

Gentlewoman, I would to God you knew my thoughts. Your thoughts Sir (saith she) how should I know them, except you tell them me? It may be you think something that you are loth to tell. Not so (saith he) yet I would you knew it without telling. But that (saith she smiling) is impossible. Then (quoth he) if I might doe it without offence, I would adventure to tell you them. Sir (saith she) you may freely speak your pleasure; for I do so much assure me of

your

your honesty, that I know you will speak nothing that may procure offence.

Then thus (saith he) I acknowledge without feigning, that I am farre unworthy of so great a favour, as to be accepted for your Servant, friend, and lover, which are so fair, so gentle, and every way so gracious, that I may truly say, you are replenished with all the good gifts that nature can plant in any mortal creature: But if you would vouchsafe me this undeserved grace, my good will, diligence, and continual forwardnesse to serve and please you shall never fail: but I would therein equall the most loyal lover that ever lived, I would esteeme you more than any thing else, and tender more your good name and credit than mine own.

Good Sir (quoth she) I heartily thank you for your kinde offer, but I pray you speak no more of such matters, for I neither know what love is, nor yet care for knowing it: This is not the lesson that my Mother teacheth me now adays. Why (saith he) if it please you, she shall know nothing of it; yet the other day I heard her talke of preferring you in marriage to one Master G.R. How say you to that (quoth shee) Marry thus (answers the Gentleman) if you would vouchsafe to entertaine me for your Servant, I would never marry, but onely rely upon your favour.

But that (said she) should be no profit to either of us both, I beleeve it would be to my reproach, which I had not thought you would seek. Nay (quoth hee) I had rather dye than seek your discredit. Well Sir (saith she) speake no more hereof, for if my Mother should perceive it, I were utterly undone. And it may be her Mother makes her a sign to give over, fearing she doth not play her part well.

At the breaking up of their amorous Parley, he conveys into her hand a gold ring, or some such toy, desiring her to take it and keep it for his sake: which at the first (according to her Mothers precepts) she doth refuse: but upon his more earnest urging of it, she is content to take it in the way of honesty, and not on any promise or condition of any farther matter: when it was brought to this passe, the mother makes motion of a journey to be made the next morning, some ten or twelve miles off, to visit, or feast with some friend, or to some Faire, or whatsoever other occasion presents it self. To this motion they all agree, and afterwards sit down to supper, where he is placed next the Daughter, who carries her self so toward him with

her

her piercing glances, that the young Heire is set on fire therewith: Well, morning comes, they mount on Horseback, and by the opinion of them all, there is never a Horse in the company that can carry double but his: So the gull is appointed to have the Maiden ride behinde him, whereof he is not a little proud: and when he feels her hold fast by the middle (which she doth to stay her self the better) he is even ravished with joy.

After their returning home, which perhaps will be the same night, the Mother taking the Daughter aside, questions with her, touching all that had passed between the amorous Gallant, and her: which when her daughter had rehearsed, then proceeds the wily Grandame thus: If he court thee any more (as I know he will) then make him answer that thou hast heard thy father and me talk of matching thee with Master G.R. but that thou hast no desire as yet to be married: if he then offers to make thee his Wife, and use any comparisons of his worth and wealth, as though he were every way as good as he, thank him for his good will and kindenesse, and tell him that you will speake with me about it, and that for thy own part, thou couldst finde in thy heart to have him to thy Husband rather than any one else: upon this lesson the daughter sleeps, revolving it all night in her minde.

The next morning shee walkes into the Garden, and this lusty ponker followes; when having given her time of the day, he falls to his former suit. She wills him to give over such talk, or she will leave his company: Is this the love you bear me (quoth she) to seek my dishonesty? You know well enough that my Father and Mother are minded to bestow me otherwise.

Ah my sweet Mistris (saith he) I would they did so far favour me herein, as they do him: I dare boldly say and sweare it, and without vaine glory utter it, that I am every way his equall. O Sir, (answers she) I would he were like you. Ah sweet Mistris (saith he) you vain to thinke better of me than I deserve, but if you would further vouchsafe me that other favour, I should esteeme my self most happy. In troth Sir (saith she) it is a thing that I may not do of my self, without the counsel and consent of my Parents, to whom I would gladly move it, if I thought they would not be offended: But it would be so much the better, if you brake the matter unto them; and be sure, if they refer the matter to me,

you

you shall speed as soone as any. He being ravisht with these words, and yielding her infinite thanks, trots presently to the Mother, to get her good will.

To be short (with some little adoe) the matter is brought about, even in such sort as he would desire: they are straightway contracted, and immediately wedded, both because that her friends fear that the least delay will prevent all, and because he is so hot on the spur, that he thinkes every hour a year till it be done. Well, the wedding night comes, wherein she behaves her self so (by her Mothers counsell) that he dares swear on the Bible that he had her Maidenhead.

Within a while after, it comes to his Friends eares, without whose knowledge he hath married himself, who are exceeding sorry, knowing shee was no meet match for him, and it may be they have heard withall of his Wives humour: but now there is no remedy, that knot is knit, and cannot be undone, they must therefore have patience perforce.

Well he brings his faire Wife home to his own house, where (God wot) he hath but a small time of pleasure, for within three or four moneths after their marriage, she is brought to bed: Judge then in what taking the poor man is. If he put her away, his shame will be publike, she grows common, and he not be permitted to marry again while he lives, and if he keep her still, love her he cannot, suspect her he will, and she both hate him, & perhaps seek his end: Finally, all the joys, pleasures, and delights, which before time they had, are all turned to brawls, banning, cursing and fighting. Thus is he hampered in Lobs pound, where he must of force remain, till death ends his lives miseries.

## CHAP. XII. The humour of a Woman being matched with an over-kinde Husband.

There is another humour incident to a Woman, which is when a Young man hath turmoyled and toiled himselfe so long, that with much adoe, he hath gotten into Lobs pound, and hath perhaps met with a Wife according to his owne desire, and perchance such a one, that it had beene better for him to have lighted

lighted on another: Yet he likes her so well, that he would not have mist her for any Gold. for in his opinion there is no Woman alive like unto her, hee hath a great delight to heare her speake, is proud of his match, and peradventure is withall of so sheepish a Nature, that he hath purposed wholly to governe himselfe by her counsel and direction: So that if any one speake to him about a Bargaine, or whatsoever other businesse, he tells them that he will have his Wives opinion in it, and if she be content, he will goe forrow with it; if not, then will he give it over: Thus is he as tame and pliable as a Jack-an-Apes to his Keeper. If the Prince set forth an Army, and shee be unwilling that he should go, who (you may thinke) will aske her leave, then must he stay at home, fight who will for the Countrey: But if she be at any time desirous to have his roome (which many times she likes better than his company) shee wants no Journeys to imploy him in, and he is as ready as a Page to undertake them: If she chide, he answers not a word; generally, whatsoever she doth, or howsoever, he thinks it well done.

Judge now what a case this silly Calfe is in: Is not hee (thinke you) finely drest, that is in such subjection? The honestest Woman, and most modest of that Sexe, if she weare the Breeches, she is so out of reason in taunting and controlling her Husband: For this is their common fault, and be shee never so wise, yet because a Woman, scarce able to governe her selfe, much lesse her Husband, and all his affaires: For were it not so, doubtlesse God would have made her the head: which sith it is otherwise, what can be more preposterous, than that the Head should be governed by the Foote? If then a wise and honest Womans superiority be unseemly, and breed great inconveniences, &c. How is he drest (thinke you) if he light on a fond, wanton, and malicious Dame? Then (doubtlesse) he is soundly sped: shee will not stick to keep a sweet-heart under his nose; yet is hee so blinde, that hee can perceive nothing, but for more security she will many times send him packing beyond Sea, about some odde errand, which she will buzze in his eares, and hee will performe it at her pleasure, albeit she send him forth at midnight, in Raine, Haile, or Snow, for he must be a man fit for all weathers: Their children (if they have any) must needs be

brought up, apparelled, fed, and taught, onely according to her pleasure: and one speciall point of their learning, is always to make no account of their Father: If any of their children be daughters, she will marry them according to her minde, to whom she list, when she list, and give with them what Dowry she list, without acquainting him therewith, till she have concluded the match, and then she tells him, not to have his consent, but as a Master may tell his servant, to give him direction how to behave himselfe to deale therein. Finally, she orders all things as she thinks best her self, making no more account of him (especially if he be in years) than men do of an old horse which is past labour.

Thus is he mewed up in Lobs pound, plunged in a sea of cares and crosses, yet he (kinde foole) deems himselfe most happy in his unhappinesse, where he must now perforce remaine while his life doth last, and great pitty it were he should want it, sith he likes it so well.

## CHAP. XIII. The humour of a Woman whose Husband is gone beyond the Sea, upon some businesse.

Another humour of a woman is, when the Husband hath been married some seven or eight years, more or lesse, and as he thinks he hath met with a good Wife as any man can have, with whom he hath continued all the aforesaid time, with great delights and pleasures: But admit he be a Gentleman, and that he is desirous to purchase honour by following Arms, and in this humour he is resolved to make a step abroad, and not to tarry alwaies like a cowardly Drone by the smoake of his owne Chimney: But when he is ready to depart, she having her cheekes blubbered with teares, falls about his neck, cols, kisseth, and imbraceth him, then weeping, sighing, and sobbing, she thus begins to him:

Ah sweet Husband, will you now leave me? Will you thus depart from me, and from your loving Children, which know not when we shall see you againe, or whether you shall ever come home

againe,

again or no? Alas ſweet Husband go not: Tarry with us ſtill, if you leave us, we are utterly undone.

Ah ſweet Wife (ſaith he) diſſwade me not from this enterpriſe, which concerns my Credit and Allegeance: for it is our Princes commandment, and I muſt obey: but be you well aſſured, I will not be long from you (if it pleaſe God.)

Thus doth he comfort and quiet her in the beſt ſort that he can, and be ſhe never ſo importunate, be her teares never ſo many, her intreaty never ſo forcible, yet goe he will, eſteeming his Renown and Duty to his Prince and Countrey, more than Wife and Children, though next to it, he eſteem and love them cheefeſt of all other. And at his departure, he recommends them to the care and courteſie of his cheefeſt friends: Yet ſome there be whoſe tender hearts meet ſo eaſily with kinde compaſſion, that one of their wives teares, and the leaſt of their intreats, will tye them ſo faſt by the leg at home, that they will not ſtir one foot from her ſweet ſide, neither for King nor Keyſar, Wealth nor Honour. Theſe are Crabbes, and unworthy to be called Gentlemen.

But to returne to this valourous and brave minded Gentleman, of whom we ſpake before; It may be, that either by the long continuance of the Wars, or by his miſ-fortunes, in being taken Priſoner, or ſome other lett, he comes not home in foure or five years, and all that while there is no newes of him, you may be ſure that his Wife is a ſorrowfull Woman, and wholly ſurcharged with grief, being thus deprived of her loving Mate, and hearing nothing of his eſtate. But all things have an end, and ſhe ſeeing that in ſo long time, ſhe can heare no tidings of him, doth peremptorily conclude that he is dead. Then conſidering to live comfortleſſe in Widowes eſtate, were an uncouth life, ſhe determines to marry her ſelfe to ſome one, ſo ſoon as conveniently ſhe may: which will be ſoone enough: for a faire Woman if willing, can want no choice. Thus the former ſorrow is ſomewhat alaid, and within a while after, cleane extinguiſht by the freſh delights, pleaſures, contents and ſolace, which this new choice doth yeeld. So that now her other Husband is wholly forgotten, her Children which ſhe had by him little regarded, and the Goods which belong to them, are ſpent on others, while the poore wretches want things needfull, but not blowes and hard uſage.

To be short, the teares which she bestowed upon her other Husband at his departure, are dried up, her imbraces vanished. And whosoever should see her with this second Husband, and what kindenesse she shewes him, would verily think that she loves him far better than she did the first, who in the mean while is either taken Prisoner, or else fighting in extream hazard of his life.

But in the end it chanceth so, that by paying his Ransom (if he have been prisoner) home he comes, clean changed, through the many troubles he hath had: and being come somewhat neer, fails not to enquire of his wife and children, for he is in great fear, that they are either dead, or in some great distresse. And doubtlesse in the time of his Imprisonment, or other dangers, he hath oft thought, oft dreamed of them, and oft sorrowed for them, oft besought God to preserve and blesse them. And that perhaps sometimes, at the very instant when she was in the others arms, toying and dallying, and in the midst of her delights.

Well, enquiring (as aforesaid) heares that she is married againe, then judge you with what grief he hears it. But his grief is bootlesse, for now the matter is past remedy, if he have any care of his credit, any regard of his estimation, he will never take her more though perhaps the other, having his pleasure of her, could be well contented either to restore her to him, or to leave her to any one else.

Shee on the other side is utterly ashamed, and her name stained with perpetual reproach, and neither he nor she can marry whiles they live. Their poor children are likewise grieved and shamed at their Mothers infamy. Sometimes likewise it happens that for the wifes cause the Husband being courageous quarrels, and perhaps combats with him, who being better than himself, doth either wound or kill him, and the occasion hereof sprung from their wives pride, because (forsooth) she will take the wall of the others Wife, or sit above her: whom she will in no wise suffer, nor lose an inch of her estate, and hereunto the Husbands must go together by the ears.

Thus the supposed blessednesse which he expected by plunging himselfe in Lobs pound, is turned into sorrow, trouble, danger, and continual discontent while life doth last.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XIV. The humour of a Woman that hath beene twice married.

THere is another humour belonging to a Woman, which is, when a Young man (having found the way into Lobs pound) meets with a Wife of like years, fresh, lusty, faire, kinde, and gracious: with whom he hath lived two or three years in all delights, joys and pleasures, that any married couple could have, never did the one displease the other: Never soule word past betwixt them, but they are almost still colling and billing each other, like a couple of Doves: And nature hath framed such Sympathy between them, that if the one be ill at ease or discontented, the other is so likewise. But in the middest of this their mutual love and solace, it chanceth that the dyes, whereat he grieves so extreamly, that he is almost beside himselfe with sorrow: he mourns not onely in his Apparel, for an outward shew, but unfeignedly in his very heart; and that so much, that he shuns all places of pleasure, and all company, lives solitarily, and spends the time in daily complaints and moans, and bitterly bewailing the losse of so good a Wife, wherein no man can justly blame him, for it is a losse worthy to be lamented, and a Jewel, which whosoever hath, is happy (but this happinesse is very rare.)

To be short, his thoughts are all on her, and shee is so firmely printed in his minde, that whether he sleepe or wake, shee seemes alwayes to be in his sight: but as all things have an end, so here had sorrow. After a while, some of his friends having spied out a second match, which as they thinke is very fit for him, doe prevaile so much with him, through their perswasions, that hee accepts it, and marries himselfe againe, but not as before, with a Young Maid, but with a lusty Widdow, of a meeale age, and much experience, who by the trial which shee had of her first Husband, knowes how to handle the second: But that she may doe it the better, shee doth not presently discover her humour, till she have thorowly markt how he is inclined, what his conditions are, and

what his nature is: which finding it milde, and kinde, and very flexible (the fittest mould to cast a Fole in) having now the full length of his foot, then shewes she her selfe what she is, unmasking her dissembling malice; her first attempt is to usurpe Superiority and to become his Head, and this she obtaines without great difficulty, for there is nothing so lavish as a simple and well natured young man, being in subjection, that is married to a Widdow especially if she be (as the most of them are) of a perverse and crabbed nature. I may very well compare him to an unfortunate Wretch whose ill fortune is to be cast into some strong Prison, under the keeping of a most cruel and pittilesse Jaylor, that is not moved to compassion, but rather to great rigour, in beholding the miseries of this poore Wretch, whose onely refuge in this distresse, is to pray unto God, to give him patience to endure this crosse, for if he complaine of his hard usage, it will afterwards prove worse.

But to proceed, This jolly Widdow will within a while grow jealous, feare and suspect that some other Dame hath part of that which shee so earnestly desireth, and wherewith she could never be satisfied, so that if he glut not her insatiate humour, straightway shee conceiveth this opinion; If he doe but onely talke, nay, (which is worse) looke on any other Woman, for shee by her good will would be alwayes in his armes, or at the least in his company: For as the Fish which having beene in water that through the heat of the Summer is halfe dried up, begins to stick full of mud, seekes for fresh water, and having found it, doth willingly remaine therein, and will in no wise returne to his former place: Even so an old Woman, having gotten a young Man, will cling to him like Ivy to an Elme.

But on the other side, a young man cannot love an old Woman, howsoever he doth dissemble neither is there any that more endangers his death: for it is with him, as with one that drinketh muscle wine, who if he be thirsty, feeles nothing while he is drinking, but at the end of his draught, he feels such a displeasing taste, that it doth almost turne his stomacke.

But if Young men in no wise can fancy old Women, what love thinke you young Women can beare to old Men, when besides the sundry imperfections of their Age, which are so loathsome, that it

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is impossible for a fresh, young, tender Damsell, (be shée never so vertuous) to endure their company, much lesse the kisses and imbraces of the person which hath them: All the lusty Gallants thereabouts will not faile to use whatsoever devices and meanes possible for the horning of the old Dotard: hoping that she will be easily won to wantonnesse: And surely they ground this hope on great likelihood, for sith it is no difficult exploit to graft the like kindnes on a young mans forehead, who is able in far better measure to feed his Wives appetite, and she hath therefore more cause to be true to him, it may surely seem no great matter to perform the like piece of service with this other unfortunate Dame.

But now to returne to our young man, pok'd (as before I said) to this old Widdow, I thus conclude, that his estate is most miserable: For besides the danger of his health, and besides the subjection, nay, rather servitude which he lives in, this third evil, (I meane his Wives jealousie) is alone an intolerable torment unto him: So that be he never so quiet, never so desirous to content her, never so fearefull to displease her, yet cannot he avoid her brawles, objections, and false accusations of Lewdnesse and Disloyalty: For an Old Woman infected with Jealousie, is like a Hellish Fury.

If you goe to any of her Friends about businesse, yea, to the Church to serve God, yet will shée alwayes thinke the worst, and assure her selfe, that he playes false, though indeed hée bee never so continent: Who whatsoever he pleadeth in his owne defence, yea, though hée prove himselfe blamelesse, by such reasons as shée can by no reason confute, yet will not all this satisfie her: Such is the perverseness of her stubborne, crabbed, and malicious nature, made worse by Dotage and Raging Jealousie: For being privy to her owne defects, and knowing that he by reason of his youth and handsomeness may perchance fall in favour with a young Dame, thinking withall that a young man, when hée may have such a match, will be loth to leave it for a worse, or preferre sowre verjuice before sweete wine, she concludes peremptorily in those suggestions as before. Loe here the fruits of this Asses turning into Lobs pound, and intangling of himselfe againe, when he had once gotten out to his former liberty, which if hée once more look for, hee is mad; for he must now perforce continue

nue there while life both laſt, which by this meanes, will be farre ſhorter, and hee look farre older, having beene but two yeares married with this old crib, than if he had lived ten yeares with a young wife.

## CHAP. XV. The humour of a young woman given over to all kinde of wantonneſſe.

THere is yet another humour that a Woman is ſubject to, which is, when an unfortunate young Man having long laboured to get in to Lobs pound, and having in the end obtained his deſires, doth match himſelfe with a luſty wanton Young Wench, which without feare of him, or care of her owne credit, takes her pleaſure freely, and withall, ſo over-boldly, and unadviſedly, that within a while her Husband perceives it, who thereupon being not a little enraged, doth in the heat of his impatience, after much brawling on both ſides, roughly and deſperately threaten her, thinking thereby to terrifie her, and make her honeſt by compulſion: But that makes her worſe, for whereas before ſhe did it for wantonneſs, now will ſhe doe it for deſpight: and what with the one and the other, be ſo inflamed, that were ſhe ſure to be killed for it, yet would ſhe not leave it: Which he perceiving, watching her doings ſo narrowly, that in the end he ſees her ſweetheart come cloſely to his houſe, then being on fire with fury, runnes haſtily to ſurprize him, and enters his Wives Chamber, with full purpoſe to kill him, though he had tenne thouſand lives: But judge you what a taking the poore young man is in, ſeeing himſelfe thus ſurprized, and looking for nothing elſe but preſent death, becauſe he hath nothing to defend himſelfe. But ſhee, for whoſe ſake he hath incurred this danger, doth kindely free him by this ſtratagem: for as her Husband is ready to ſtrike or ſtabbe him, ſhe catcheth him haſtily about the middle, crying out, Alas man what do you mean? While ſhe thus ſtayes her Husband, the yonker betakes him to his heeles, running downe the ſtaires amain, and out of the doores, as if the Devil were at his taile, and after him the good man, as faſt as he can drive. But when he ſees that he cannot overtake him, he turnes backe in a like rage,

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to wreak his anger on his Wife. But shee dreading as much gets her haſtily (before his returne) to her Mother, to whom shee complaines of his cauſelesse ſuſpition, and Deviliſh fury, juſtifying her ſelf, as if shee were not the Woman that would commit ſo lewd a part: But her Mother ſifting the matter narrowly, her Daughter confeſſeth her fault, but to make it ſeeme the leſſe, shee tells her a large tale of the Young Mans importunity, who for ſo long time together, did continually trouble her, and whither ſoever shee went, he would be ſure to follow her, begging pitifully her love, and favour, that shee had often ſharply anſwered him, and flatly denyed his Suit, yet could shee not for all that be rid of him: ſo that in the end shee was inforced for her own quietneſſe to grant his requeſt: Shee repeats withall, how kindely and intirely shee loves her, how much he hath beſtowed on her, how many toule journeys hee hath had for her ſake, in Raine and Snow, as well by Night as Day, in danger of Thieves, in peril of his Life, and how narrowly he eſcaped her Husband the laſt time, ſo that for very pitty and compaſſion, shee was moved to favour him: And no Woman could be ſo hard hearted, as to ſuffer ſo true and kinde a Young Man to languiſh for her love, and dye unregarded: for on my life Mother (ſaith shee) if I had not yielded, hee would have died for thought.

The Mother hearing her Daughter to ſay thus, accepts her anſwer for current, and thinkes that shee hath ſufficiently juſtified her ſelfe; but to prevent further ſcandall, and to appeale her angry ſonne in law, and reconcile her Daughter unto him by taking a miſt before his eyes, ſhe takes this courſe, ſhe ſends for her ſpecial Gollips and Companions, whoſe counſels in like caſes shee doth uſe: They comming at the firſt call, and being all aſſembled, either before a good fire (if it be Winter) or in a greene Arbour (if it be Summer) one of them noting her daughters heavy countenance, demands the cauſe thereof: Marry (ſaith shee) shee hath had a miſchance, about which, I have made bold to trouble you, and crave your advice: With that ſhe recounts all the whole matter unto them, but ſhewing the true cauſe of her Husbands anger: To her ſhort shee hath ready two or three pottles of Wine, and a few junkets, which they preſently fall aboard on, that they may the better give their ſeveral verdicts afterwards; mean while they com-

for the Young Woman, bidding her assure her selfe, that her Husband is more perplexed than shee, and that I know by mine owne experience, for my Husband and I were once at variance, but hee could never be quiet till we were made friends. In good faith Gossip (saith another) and so serve I mine. Another makes a motion to send for the Young Gallant that is so true a lover to her Gossips Daughter, that his presence may cheer her, and rid away her Melancholly.

This Motion doth her Mother faintly contradict, but in the end most voyces prevaile, he is sent for, and comes with a trice, then there is much good chat, many a reproach and kinde scoff given the poore Husband: And to mend the matter, comes in the Chamber-maid, who was privy to all the former close packing betweene her Mistris and her Sweet-heart, and for her silence and employment, in furthering both their contents, she hath gotten a good new gown, and somewhat else.

It may be her Master hath sent her abroad about some business, or perhaps shee coyns an excuse of her selfe, thereby onely to make a step abroad to see her Mistris, and to bring her some news how all things goe at home: Shee hath no sooner set her foot within the roome where they are, then one of them askes how her Master doth? By Masse (saith shee) I never saw a man in that taking: I dare say, that since yesterday morning when this mis-fortune happened, hee hath not eaten one crumme, drunk one drop, or sleept one wink all yesternight. To day he sate down to dinner, and put one bit in his mouth, but could not swallow it, for he spit it out presently, & sate a good while after in a dump: In the end striking his knife on the table, he rose hastily, and went into the Garden, and immediately came in again: To be short he is altogether out of temper, and can rest no where: He doth nothing but sigh and sob, and he looks like a dead man: hereat they laugh apace, and to be short, they determine that two of the chief of them, shall go and speak with him the next morning, and that when they are in the middest of their talke, the rest shall come in afterward. The Mother with her two Gossips, according to this plot, do proceed in the matter. And next morning finding him in his dumps, one of them gently askes him what hee ails: hereto he answers onely with a sigh: whereupon shee takes occasion thus to speak: In good faith Gossip, I must chide you,

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my Gossip your wives mother told me I know not what of a disagreement betwoone your wife and you, and a certaine fond humour that you are fallen into: I wis I am sorry to hear it: And before God you are not so wise as I had thought you had been, to wrong your wife thus without a cause, for I durst lay my life there is no such matter. By this good day (saith another) I have known her ever since she was a little one, both Maid and Wife, and I never saw but well by the woman: And in good sooth it grieves me to the very heart, that her name should now come in question without cause: Before God, you have done the poor woman that disgrace, and so stained her good name, that you will neder be able to make her amends. Then steps in the Chambe:-maid with her five eggs. In good faith (saith she) I know not what my Master hath seen, or whereon he doth ground his suspition, but I take God to my witnesse, that I never saw any such matter by my Mistris, and yet I am sure that if there were any such thing, I should see it as soone as another. Gods body, Drab (saith he, all inraged) wilt thou face me down of that which my self saw? Oh Gossip, (quoth one of the Dames) God forbid that every man and woman which are alone together, should do evil. I deny not (saith the Chambermaid) that the villanous knave hath long sued unto my Mistris for such a matter, but by my honesty Master, I know that there is never a man alive, whom she hates more: And rather than she would commit any such folly with him, she would see him hang'd, and be burned her self: I marvel how the Devil he got into the house.

Here the other Gossips come in, one after another, and each gives her verdict: In good faith Gossip (saith one) I think that next your wife, there is never a woman in the world, that loves you better than I do: and if I knew or thought any such matter, I would not sett to tell you of it. Surely (saith another) this is but the Devils work to set them at variance, for he cannot abide that husband and wife should live well together. In good faith saith the third, the poor woman doth nothing but weep. By Christ (quoth the fourth) I fear it will cost her her life, she grieves and takes on in such sort. Then comes the Mother weeping and crying out, making as though she would scratch out his eyes with her nailes; exclaiming in this sort:

Ah cursed Caitiffe, woe worth the time that ever my Daughter

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matcht with her, to be thus shamed and slandered, and have her name spotted without cause. But she is well enough served, that would take such a base churle, when she might have had sundry good Gentlemen. Ah good Gossip (saith another) be not out of patience.

Ah Gossip (saith she) if my Daughter were in fault, by our good Lord, I would kill her my self. But think ye I have no cause to be moved, when I see my child, being guiltlesse, thus used? With that she flings out of doors in a rage, and all the Gossips come upon him thick and threefold, who is so full of sundry thoughts, and so grieved and troubled, that he knows not whereon to resolve, nor what to say.

In the end they growing somewhat calmer, promise if he will, to undertake the reconciling of him and his wife, which he most earnestly desireth them to do.

They accordingly perform it, so that all controversies are ended, all strife ceased, the matter hushed up, and his wife taken home again; who taking greater courage by the successe hereof, and being now clean past shame, will grow far bolder in her villany, than before. And the poor Peacock, on the other side, hading his courage thus quailed, will never afterwards fall at odds with her, for fear of the like storm, but will suffer her to have her own will in all things, and be in a manner subject to her, spending the remnant of his life in care, fear, discontent and grief, his goods wasting he knows not how, and himself becoms a laughing stock to all that know him.

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